



Presented to the

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO
LIBRARY

by the

ONTARIO LEGISLATIVE
LIBRARY

1980

71278

BLACKWOOD'S
Edinburgh
MAGAZINE.

VOL. CLXX.

JULY—DECEMBER 1901.



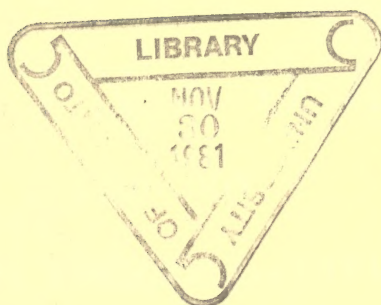
WILLIAM BLACKWOOD & SONS, EDINBURGH;

AND

37 PATERNOSTER ROW, LONDON.

1901.

All Rights of Translation and Republication reserved.



AP
4
B6
U170

BLACKWOOD'S EDINBURGH MAGAZINE.

No. MXXIX.

JULY 1901.

VOL. CLXX.

CONTENTS.

THE CONQUEST OF CHARLOTTE. PART I.—MY LEGACY OF FAMILY HISTORY,	1
“PUSH” LARRIKINISM IN AUSTRALIA. BY AMBROSE PRATT,	27
A CORSAIR OF SAINT MALO,	41
DOOM CASTLE: A ROMANCE. BY NEIL MUNRO. CONCLUSION,	53
A VILLAGE IN THE VAL D'OR. BY MRS P. G. HAMERTON,	64
BETWEEN THE LINES. CONCLUSION,	77
A GENTLEMAN OF SCOTLAND. BY ANDREW LANG, . .	94
THE HOUSE THAT WAS NEVER BUILT. BY HENRY LAWSON,	106
A HALT ON THE KING'S HIGHWAY. BY HUGH CLIFFORD,	115
THE LONDON IRISH,	124
MUSINGS WITHOUT METHOD,	135
LORD MILNER AND THE COUNTRY—THE VITUPERATION OF THE PRESS—WORDS THAT CONVEY NO THOUGHT—THE DELEGATION OF AUTHORITY—THE TREATMENT OF SIR BARTLE FRERE—THE CULT OF THE MILLIONAIRE—THE BAYARD OF THE MONEY-BAG —THE DANGER OF PHILANTHROPY— <i>PECUNIA OLET.</i>	
WAR OFFICE ORGANISATION,	146

EDINBURGH:

WILLIAM BLACKWOOD & SONS, 45 GEORGE STREET,
AND 37 PATERNOSTER ROW, LONDON.

To whom all Communications must be addressed.

BLACKWOOD'S EDINBURGH MAGAZINE.

No. MXXX.

AUGUST 1901.

VOL. CLXX.

CONTENTS.

A BORDER BURN. BY ALFRED AUSTIN,	159
THREE YEARS WITH THE METROPOLITAN FIRE BRIGADE. BY G. NUGENT-BANKES,	165
THE CONQUEST OF CHARLOTTE. PART I.—MY LEGACY OF FAMILY HISTORY,	185
ACROSS THE HIMALAYAS IN MID-WINTER. BY THE EARL OF RONALDSHAY,	206
FOUNTAINBLUE. BY JOHN BUCHAN,	218
PORTLAND. BY MAY BYRON,	243
SPECULATING ON A DOUBLE EVENT,	252
MUSINGS WITHOUT METHOD,	260
THE WORSHIP OF SPEED—THE UNIVERSAL PASSION OF RACING —THE CONSEQUENT DECAY OF SPORT—PACE WITHOUT MUSCLE— THE DEVELOPMENT OF CRICKET—THE HUSTLER IN LITERATURE —THE VANDAL AT WORK—MARBLE HILL AND HOGARTH HOUSE—‘BUSH-WHACKING.’	
THREE NOVELS. BY G. S. STREET,	271
A SIDE-SHOW. BY “LINESMAN,”	277
A LAQUID SESSION AND A LIBERAL FARCE,	293

EDINBURGH:

WILLIAM BLACKWOOD & SONS, 45 GEORGE STREET,
AND 37 PATERNOSTER ROW, LONDON.

To whom all Communications must be addressed.

BLACKWOOD'S EDINBURGH MAGAZINE.

No. MXXXI.

SEPTEMBER 1901.

VOL. CLXX.

CONTENTS.

PIANISTS OF THE PAST. PERSONAL RECOLLECTIONS BY THE LATE CHARLES SALAMAN,	307
WITH THE PILCHARD FLEET. BY STEPHEN GWYNN,	331
CRICKET RECORDS. BY HAMISH STUART,	339
THE CONQUEST OF CHARLOTTE. CHAPS. VI.-VIII,	351
SKINNER OF SKINNER'S HORSE,	374
A RECTOR'S STORY,	389
THE STATE OF IRELAND,	405
ÆLFRED THE KING. BY MRS ADA BARTRICK BAKER,	416
OUR L.-T.	419
MUSINGS WITHOUT METHOD,	429

THE PALM WITHOUT THE DUST—LORD ROSEBERY'S LASSITUDE
—HIS POLITICAL UNCERTAINTY—THE CREATION OF MR GLAD-
STONE—THE FAVOURITE OF THE PRESS—LORD CHESTERFIELD'S
'LETTERS'—THE WORLD'S MISUNDERSTANDING—HIS MORALITY
—HIS POLITICAL WISDOM AND PRESCIENCE—MR CAINE AND
HIS RIVAL—THE VIRTUE OF IMAGINATION—A SURFEIT OF
EMOTION—AN EGYPTIAN PLEASANTRY.

EDINBURGH:

WILLIAM BLACKWOOD & SONS, 45 GEORGE STREET,
AND 37 PATERNOSTER ROW, LONDON.

To whom all Communications must be addressed.

BLACKWOOD'S EDINBURGH MAGAZINE.

No. MXXXII.

OCTOBER 1901.

VOL. CLXX.

CONTENTS.

RECENT NAVAL PROGRESS. BY "ACTIVE LIST,"	443
THE WESTCOTES. CHAPS. I.-III.	
BY A. T. QUILLER-COUCH,	458
FINDING THE WAY TO THE POLE,	476
GAMES IN OLD AND MODERN FRANCE.	
BY ANDREW LANG,	484
A CHINAMAN IN LONDON,	492
THE CONQUEST OF CHARLOTTE. CHAPS. IX., X.,	499
THE LITTLE SON. BY MOIRA O'NEILL,	522
CHINA REVISITED. BY ALEXANDER MICHIE,	523
THE GRAND FIASCO—ORDEAL OF TERROR AND TEMPTATION— COMPARATIVE MORALITY—PLAIN DEDUCTIONS—GERMAN DISCIPLINE— SOLDIERS OF ALL NATIONS—THE FLAG MANIA—MILITARY FRICTION— RAVAGES OF FOREIGN TROOPS—INDIAN CONTINGENT—MUTUAL IMPRESSIONS— ANGLO-SAXON RELATIONS.	
TELLING MRS BAKER. BY HENRY LAWSON,	534
THE MOSLEM CONFRATERNITIES OF NORTH AFRICA.	
BY WALTER B. HARRIS,	545
MUSINGS WITHOUT METHOD,	559
THE MURDER OF WILLIAM MCKINLEY—AMERICA'S WISE AND SIMPLE PRESIDENT— ANARCHY WICKEDLY EXCUSED—THE CANT OF "POLITICAL CRIME"— HOW TO TREAT ANARCHISTS—AN IMPRISONED EMPEROR—THE CENSORSHIP OF THE PRESS— FRENCH AND ENGLISH—A BETTER KNOWLEDGE ACROSS THE CHANNEL— M. CHEVRILLON'S INTELLIGENT APPRECIATION.	
THE TRUTH ABOUT THE LIBERAL PARTY,	570

EDINBURGH:

WILLIAM BLACKWOOD & SONS, 45 GEORGE STREET,
AND 37 PATERNOSTER ROW, LONDON.

To whom all Communications must be addressed.

BLACKWOOD'S EDINBURGH MAGAZINE.

No. MXXXIII.

NOVEMBER 1901.

VOL. CLXX.

CONTENTS.

NIGHT. BY "LINESMAN,"	579
ON THE HIRE SYSTEM: A DRAWING-ROOM COMEDY. BY L. LOCKHART LANG,	591
THREE BIOGRAPHIES,	613
ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON—SIR GERALD GRAHAM—SIR ROBERT MURDOCH SMITH.	
THE WESTCOTES. CHAPS. IV.-VI. BY A. T. QUILLER-COUCH,	631
FRANCINA VAN RHEDE: A LEGEND OF TRINCOMALEE. BY A. S. MOSS BLUNDELL,	649
A VILLAGE IN THE NEW FOREST. BY CHARLES GLEIG,	658
THE CONQUEST OF CHARLOTTE. CHAPS. XI, XII,	668
LIFE IN LABRADOR. BY W. T. GRENFELL,	688
WITH THE FLEET AT DELAGOA BAY,	699
MUSINGS WITHOUT METHOD,	707
THE NEED OF EFFICIENCY—THE APPOINTMENT OF SIR REDVERS BULLER—THE PRESS AND THE ARMY—SIR REDVERS CONDEMNED IN DESPATCHES—THE EVIDENCE OF HIS OWN SPEECH—THE GOVERNMENT MORE BLAMEWORTHY THAN THE GENERAL—THE TIMIDITY OF OUR MINISTERS—THE RELATION OF PARLIAMENT TO THE COUNTRY—THE NEW TRANSLATION OF <i>TOLSTOI</i> —THE EDINBURGH FOLIO.	

EDINBURGH:

WILLIAM BLACKWOOD & SONS, 45 GEORGE STREET,
AND 37 PATERNOSTER ROW, LONDON.

To whom all Communications must be addressed.

BLACKWOOD'S EDINBURGH MAGAZINE.

No. MXXXIV.

DECEMBER 1901.

VOL. CLXX.

CONTENTS.

DAY. BY "LINESMAN,"	717
CAMPING ON LAKE WINNIPEG. BY C. HANBURY-WILLIAMS,	731
NEVER MARRIED. HER SISTER. BY MOIRA O'NEILL,	747
JONES OF PANNMAEN,	749
BYRON, 1816-1824. BY G. S. STREET,	761
THE WESTCOTES. CHAPS. VII.-IX. BY A. T. QUILLER-COUCH,	772
RECENT FICTION,	793
'KIM'—'THE WARDEN OF THE MARCHES'—'THE COUNTRY I COME FROM'—'JOE WILSON AND HIS MATES'—'MY BRILLIANT CAREER'—'THE HISTORY OF SIR RICHARD CALMADY'— 'MARIETTA'—'COUNT HANNIBAL'—'THE SHOES OF FORTUNE'— 'THE END OF AN EPOCH'—'THE HOUSE WITH THE GREEN SHUTTERS.'	
THE STATE OF INDIA,	807
THE CONQUEST OF CHARLOTTE. CHAP. XIII,	820
LI HUNG-CHANG. BY ALEXANDER MICHIE,	836
MUSINGS WITHOUT METHOD,	852
TWO YEARS OF EMOTION—GREAT OCCASIONS AND THEIR PAGE- ANTRY—THE RETURN OF THE DUKE OF YORK—OUR COLONIAL EMPIRE—THE CONFUSION OF TONGUES—THE OLD RADICAL AND THE NEW—AN EDITION OF HAZLITT—HIS POLITICAL PREJUDICES —HIS INTEREST IN LIFE AND LETTERS—WILLIAM HAZLITT AND SAMUEL JOHNSON.	
THE MINISTRY AND THE WAR,	865
INDEX,	874

EDINBURGH:

WILLIAM BLACKWOOD & SONS, 45 GEORGE STREET,
AND 37 PATERNOSTER ROW, LONDON.

To whom all Communications must be addressed.



BLACKWOOD'S EDINBURGH MAGAZINE.

No. MXXIX.

JULY 1901.

VOL. CLXX.

THE CONQUEST OF CHARLOTTE.¹

PART I.—MY LEGACY OF FAMILY HISTORY.

CHAPTER I.—THE LEGEND OF THE SABBATH NIGHT.

THE fire-eating Major was dying in The House, at the tail of the den, which stood aglow against the October midnight. Outside, the autumn trees swayed athwart the windows, from all of which, save one, from cellar to attic, guttering candles (as it seemed) and strange tongues of flame flung contorted shadows and reflections. They streaked the loan, mottled the red rocks in the den, and squirmed bloodily in the burn beneath them, and, climbing above, played capering antics among the gardens and house-ends of the Back Bowes. In the one window lay the shaded light, by which two women watched the tough old gentleman wear away the last

moments of his seventy-two years.

All in the village who could tumble out of bed were in the Tullis's garden. They huddled together at the spectacle, and held their breath upon strange sounds that reached them from The House,—the crack of flying axles, the rattle of chains, at times a sharp, uncanny treble struck athwart the hum of voices, and the eerie whining of the Major's mare there in the pauses. The three souls in the Major's room (so said two of them) saw and heard none of these things: if the Devil sent his messengers for Major Mac-Nab, he himself did not know it, and his niece and his nursing-woman did not so much as

¹ Copyright, 1901, by Dodd, Mead, & Co., in the United States of America.
VOL. CLXX.—NO. MXXIX.

catch the rattle of their wings. I have heard it put down to a conscience grown rotted in seventy years, to an unbelief in devils or in anything beyond the grave, to exhaustion of an ill-used body,—scarce ever to anything worthier: however be it, as the story goes Major James MacNab quitted this world very peacefully up there, in despite of manifestations without so awesome that only the hardest in the garden could find voice to bicker about the import of them for the dying man.

I am reciting the great Back Bowes legend of my childhood; for the truth lying under it I refer you to the consciences of those who handed it on. This that I tell is the legend, and Rab Cuick and the elder Charlotte sailed in upon its wings. In the elbow of the stair in my father's house in Town of Tarvit hung an old print, midwife to my understanding, which represented two faithful souls being burned at the stake. Into the lower ground of the pattern rolled woolly clouds, furry-tongued, explained to me as clouds of smoke quickened by the flames of faggots, and out of them arose two faces, with expressions of so saintly an anguish, of so sensual a satisfaction in dying, as raked my emotions horribly. Even so appeared to me the legend. Save where Rab and Charlotte emerged from it, shining, the legend was nebulous; and—ironic foreshadowing!—by some whim of sprouting nature, I associated these two in my lyrical mind with the martyrs.

Later, when with a more comprehending knowledge I guessed Charlotte's story and could appraise Rab for the man he was, the legend was still hazy as the clouds in the print. Even now, though I possess a key to its pattern which I would put into your hand, it has not ceased quite to be a mystery.

It was a Sabbath night, and dark and close, though there was a shake of wind in the trees. It was so pitch dark that Mr Clephane of Clephane, who was driving with Dr Laverock from St Brise, landed in a ditch on the Cock-my-lane road, and had to walk his beast the remainder of the way home; on which account he set down the doctor at the Bowes corner at three of the morning only, when the tumult at The House was over, and the folks were back in their beds, and there was no need for the Doctor's skill at Robin Cook's cottage. Whereas, with ordinary October light, he had been stabled and sound asleep in Clephane a good two hours before that.

They had been dining with the celebrated Mr Adam, from whose house with the tower on St Brise shore you command the Firth mouth; and that, also, may account for the coup and the consequent late arrival at Clephane. For there was a cellar as well as a tower in the house, and the claret in it was excellent, howsoever it came there; and the mandarins (a notion of Mr Adam, who was in touch with the gay world) passed hot from hand to hand.

Mr Trail, the lawyer, who in after days was Provost and

Admiral of the Firth, was of the company, and discovered himself next morning, with nothing on him save his hat, nipped with cold, on his summer-house bench, and his wig and jemmy and things hung very orderly upon some dahliasticks. An hour or more earlier, Captain Duncan of Fallowfield—"Whaler" Duncan he was commonly called—had been roused from his sleep under Mr Adam's table by young McCormick, the Lieutenant of the Excise. McCormick also had lain there all night until discovered by his men with an alarum, and now he was swearing that he had been undone, and would clap in irons the whole clamjampthry who had tricked him. The half-awake "Whaler" roared that there was plenty more where the other came from, and, calling for another jorum 'spite of all the Revenue rogues between there and the Bass, turned over again; while Mr Adam, descending upon the uproar with a very haughty frown over his laugh, ordered the Lieutenant, with his men, out of his house, threatening him, as a Justice of the Peace, for a drunken rascal who connived at abominable illicit traffic under his very nose. It was a notable rouse; but if there was further scandalous issue of it, the Legend has swallowed it up.

Thomas Tod, the cattleman at Clephane, was sitting up in the kitchen for his master when Ned Blake, one of the bothy lads, came in roaring that the Resurrection was at the Back Bowes and would be at Clephane in a minute or two. "Faith, my man," said

Thomas, "you should ha' bided at the Bowes where you're not so well kent."

Blake and his neighbour Aleck had gone to sleep on a heap of dead leaves in the den near The House when returning from a shebeen on the St Brise road. Aleck's story was that he had been awakened by a great roar (which I take to have been Ned's in his flight to Clephane), and saw flames spurting from the Major's windows, like the breath from a spent horse. Afterwards, when he came to tell of this, he remembered a strong smell of sulphur. According to him, too, the clock at the moment was chapping one. It must have been that he awoke to hear the last stroke only of twelve, for his father in the Bowes observed that it was seven minutes after midnight when Aleck aroused him with a stone on his window, and brought the news to the village. Elizabeth Tullis, who was nursing the Major, said that she had counted eleven strokes of the twelve when Mirrin MacNab rose from her knees by the bedside and bent over her uncle, who had come out of his sleep. For a quarter of an hour, before he dozed again, said Elizabeth, he just looked up in Miss Mirrin's eyes with a smile, speaking nothing, but telling her much. She herself heard nothing and saw nothing by-ord'nar save the uncommon gentleness of the Major's face. It was a sweet-phrased story with which she was inspired to bear out Mirrin MacNab in the lie from which all this history springs.

It was in that quarter of an

hour that the village was roused and tumbled into the causeway. A strange thing, according to the story as some have told it, was to see each of the laddies standing straight close in beside his father, instead of all of them knotted in a bunch or jinking in a string round everybody's knees. At the causeway-head, standing alone, last of the houses out on the road to Kedron, was the cottage of the Highland Tullises. Here lived the strange man, Robert Tullis, with his sister Elizabeth, the nurse, and a younger, Christian, when she was at home: a proud, composed, and disdainful family who stood aloof in the village. This night, by some common instinct, the crowd drew unbidden to the Tullis's garden, from which there was a path and a clear view unimpeded by trees, across the den to The House. That line of vision was one of several attachments between the families of MacNab and Tullis, and it was like the others in being fantastical, romantic, and at any rate not understandable by the Back Bowes shoemakers. They explained the relation of the two houses, separated by the den and by a social difference far wider than the den, as some queer Highland or gipsy tie of loyalty and regard; and therein, I believe, were mainly right. Whatever it was, they regarded it with distrust. A general saying among them was that there was aye an ill-deedy Tullis to play flunkie to a MacNab's dishonour. Yet there were others in the village besides the Tullises who would

have given their all to serve The House; or, at least, there was one other,—my aunt, Janet Seton, who had been maid to the lady Charlotte, the Major's wife, and still waited on her memory.

Robert Tullis, when I knew him many years later, was a silent, gaunt man, but that may have been because he had so much to remember. This night he discovered himself a new creature to his neighbours. He was standing across his own door when the crowd arrived. "It's up wi' the souters o' the Bowes," he welcomed them, and jeered them to the garden end. With his frank and supple tongue, he was like a man gone a length in drink, extraordinary glib and impudent. He was *fey*, you would have said, only he lived long years afterwards.

My uncle, James Seton, a very dull man, was for ever giving voice to the thoughts which he conceived to be passing through my Aunt Janet's mind. So now he says, "The Devil has sent for his own at last"; whereas Aunt Janet, good woman, no doubt was thinking that the Devil has a terrible claim upon us all—a very different thing.

"At least," said Tullis, "the Deil kens a gentleman, and gives to the Major a special escort;" and he pointed to The House, where indeed it seemed now as if a handful of horsemen rode in under the lights.

After that, James Seton and the others challenged the Major's gentlemanly vices only, and Tullis could not dispute them, and did not attempt to. The

Major looms through the Legend monstrously distorted. I take it that he was a very ordinary gentleman, hot and gamesome, and only a middling Christian. It was Robert Tullis's device this night (or so I divine now) to keep his audience away from The House by the fascination of MacNab profligacy.

He held the crowd gaping at the sight of the Major plumped into seas of debauchery. Before he could show them the Major at the surface making for land with a fine, generous stroke, some fresh manifestations of the Evil One across the den completed the plumping picture; and his lips twitched with the excitement of inventing fresh damnable adventures for his hero. He set his narrative upon the crowd like a collie-dog on a herd of sheep.

"Dicing devils and more were the Major and his fellows in their day," he cried. "Youth! Youth! And some men are never old—go out of this world at seventy, by God! with a splash like a youngster of twenty;" and he jerked his beard in the direction of the terrible House.

A string of bobbing lights disappeared through the wood towards Clephane, and the crack of cart-wheels sounded and died away upon the high-road.

"Men! Men! What's the use of going out when your time comes save wi' the licht spirit?"

"Licht spirit," answered a cooler hand, watching the den narrowly. "A run o' brandy, say I!"

"Brandy it might be," cried Tullis, shaking with excitement. "That would be like the devils. To bury the shotten corpse and then to sell the pickling."

The crowd went fluttering from his mad words. A woman in it fell a-screaming.

"It's body-snatching, so help me," she shrieked. "Look! Look!"

Where she pointed, a cluster of lights were stealing up the hill to the mausoleum on the knoll behind The House.

"It's a Burkeing business," the woman screamed again.

"Huts! Huts!" the little Master answered it. "Burke's been dead a twel'month. Last November it was he got his *ultimum vale*. Young David Baxter told me he watched his hanging from a window in Liberton's Wynd. But Lord! Lord! . . ." and his mincing dried in his mouth.

It is strange how trivial things as well as pregnant have survived in the legend. I give it as it came to me, entire.

Tullis gathered them round him afresh for his story.

"Did they ever hear tell about the Major and the lass o' Langside dikes? That was a story. Hearken close! This was a night to draw together. The Major had been dining with a company at Dug Oliphant's, at Edenbraes. What a house that was! And what a woman, Mrs Oliphant! The Major never spoke of her but he sparkled at the eyes, and if ever a man knew a good woman it was he. That was one thing, at any rate: a man

must have seen something o' life to ken a good woman. It was high stakes in those days, and The House was full o' aigrettes and Tippoo rings and filigree from Seringapatam. They played late at Edenbraes that night, and the cock was crowing at Gilston when the Major rode home past it, with his pockets full o' money—near a thousand pounds of money."

Tullis's imagination mounted the crest of that round sum, Tullis desperately giving it rein, and ran away with him helter-skelter.

"You know the woods when you leave Gilston and turn into the Back Bowes road? Red, bristling firs, and ruddy bunkers at the edge, with root-claws dug into them! Past them the Major was riding, when the cloak of rain-cloud was flung off the moon, and his horse shied at a puddle that shot up in the road. The Major, looking over the saddle-bow, saw that it was ruddy. Blood!

"Ugh! I can understand how he felt," continued Tullis. "I mind fine the same thing happening me and a neighbour—only we were walking, and hadn't a round thousand, but we had the matter o' sixteen pound twelve, coming home from Colinsburgh show, and telling of murders done for less siller, and the red earth washed into the pool was bloody when the moon looked on't, and ugh! But the Major was a gentleman, and tough, and he looks over the saddle-bow and laughs, and would have stuck his heels into his beast's

flanks, when he sees sailing in the moon in that bloody puddle a lassie's glove . . ."

There was a break in the herding narrative—a bang and a spattering of sparrow-hail among the apple-trees, and a black thing with staring fiery eyes shooting across the boor-tree hedge between Tullis's garden and the beadle's. The crowd went flying from Tullis's story; but he was after them in a twinkling.

"Ho, ho! Men! If Dicky Duke hasn't shot at his own cat in mistake for a deil. Ah! But he has the family grudge against cats. If all stories be true, it was with being over sib with a black Tom that his mother lost her life in the Lochty. She was an auld runt! Dicky, Dicky, you blind owl, you! Who trusted you wi' a gun? A strange thing is it that it's aye the stupidest nowt in the parish that they make the bethel!"

Dicky, on his side the hedge, shaking in the knee-breeches of his office, was as sure as death that it was the Devil himself, staring with red-coal eyes out of the gooseberry bushes, that he had fired at.

"And hear! There he was coming again, up the causeway, —in new shape this time, for the noise he was making resembled a beast's bellowing."

The crowd and Tullis himself stood cock-eared for the advancing appearance. It came—a little, bearded, pock-marked man, with the legs of a tailor, and a fiddle-bow in his hand. He was shouting like one demented for Doctor Laverock.

The crowd drew breath, half-regretfully, at the sight of Robin Cook—the father of Rab, who was not yet.

“Kirsten’s taken badly, and I maun go back to her,” he was calling. “Who’ll run for Doctor La’rock?”

“My God!” he cried, halting a second when he reached the garden, and blinking as his eye ran along that straight line to The House.

“The Doctor’s not there,” Tullis cried sharply. “He’s at St Brise the night, at Mr Adam’s, and Mr Clephane with him.”

“Then Lisbeth Tullis,” Robin said, making for the cottage.

“Lisbeth’s up there certainly,” answered Tullis, pointing to The House, and he stepped out to Robin, and barred the path to the cottage.

“Then run for her, somebody, O! kind folks. I tell you, Kirsten’s taken, and not a living soul at the causeway foot,” Robin went on, when nobody budged.

“There’s a man dying over there,” says Tullis.

“And will die, whether Lisbeth is there or not,” Robin answered. “Go you to your dying Major, who were so thick with him living,” he shouted in a sudden blaze. “Go you to The House, and send Lisbeth to Kirsten, if you’re a man. O! is there not a man among you all? Not one, not one, you parcel o’ petrie balls!”

He ran his eye through the crowd and named them all, from the likeliest to the very beadle. Already the farthest

from him were stealing to the gap in the garden-wall which led out upon the causeway. Tullis followed them, seeking to stop the rout by the persuasion of his tales of wild life and the Major. The little tailor, mounting the turf-dyke by the side of the slap, kept their jostling in hand with his fiddle-bow, like a man counting sheep through a gate.

“Will none of you run!” he cried. “I left her in a fit, I tell you. She couldn’t sleep, and I got up and played her ‘The Lord’s my Shepherd’ on my fiddle. And when she was dozing off, I looks out at the window and sees—yon! ‘Keep me, Kirsten!’ I called, and Kirsten jumps up suddenly and looks out. And then she gives a moan, and there she was, taken in her cryings. And not a living soul at hand. Only William Flockhart there, running up the causeway beating his drum wi’ his weather horn, thinking it was morning, and not sure whether this betokened rain or fair.”

“Lord! he was funny!” laughed the little tailor. “O! will none of you run for Lisbeth Tullis?”

My Aunt Janet was standing at the gap; Uncle James was half-way through it.

“James, friend,” cried Robin in appeal.

At the word my uncle hastened his pace; but in a twinkling Robin had turned him with his bow. “James, my good friend,” he repeated.

“It’s a gey queer thing,” James tried to say, but his tongue clove to his mouth.

"Ask Mistress Janet — she knows," cried Tullis impudently, while the crowd sniggered, to lift the shame from themselves.

"Robin," said Aunt Janet quietly, "James, I daresay, will carry your message to Lisbeth, and I'll go back to Kirsten with you."

"Ho, ho! Janet Seton!" Tullis cried tauntingly. "Aye trying to make a man o' him? He'll stand a lot o' vamping."

For answer she tied her husband's cravat straight, even now thinking of his being presentable on going to The House.

Tullis stepped up to her.

"I'm beside myself to-night, Mrs Seton," he cried with a note of anguish. "You know, this is a sore night for me. And, Lord, what nowts they are!"

With a meaning gesture he laid a hand on her shoulder, and spoke some words into her ear.

As she edged away from his hand, in shocked hesitation at his news, suddenly he spoke it aloud, desperately.

"Folks! The Major's dying — dead, maybe. But the young Captain's dead and buried."

The village swarmed back, and clustered on him.

"It's true as touch," he cried. "The man that killed him spoke an ill word about a leddy, and that was enough for a MacNab. He would be living now, for he was clever at the sword-play, but he slipped and fell on the other's point; and it was a gentleman's sword whatever."

"How ken ye this?" asked Robin, forgetting Kirsten for a moment.

"How?" cries Tullis, stumbling in his glib story for a second. "From Christian, in London, of course," he righted himself. "It happened days syne, and far from home in Touraine; but London's full of it, and she heard it, of course, and wrote me."

"And who was the leddy?" said Uncle James, briskly, to lengthen the diversion that was saving him from that jaunt across the den.

"Hey! Found your voice, Solomon?" cried Tullis. "How ken I the woman?"

"But Christian might," persisted James.

Tullis turned on him with a sudden, fierce heat.

"What is the woman to Christian or to me, old haw-berry?" he cried.

"You said 'buried,'" my aunt said quietly.

"Ay, buried I said," answered Tullis, and he exhibited once more the tale of the MacNabs' wild doings. "Gentlemen aye are in debt, and young Captain Hector was deeper in it than most gentlemen. And now he was dead, his body maun be smuggled and buried in dead o' night, out o' sight o' the Jews."

"They've done it—see!"

The lights were descending the knoll to The House again.

"We'll have the Major in beside him before long, and the door clapped to and mortared, and then the Jews can whistle."

In the silence that fell as he

ceased, a cry like a child's cry trembled in the air.

"D'ye hear, d'ye hear?" cried the little tailor, dancing away down the causeway in an ecstasy.

The crowd shouted after him in derision, but Aunt Janet followed him to Kirsten.

"Yet it was like a child," a woman said. "A child, and near by here."

"It's the cry of a soul unhouseled," said the little Master.

"Who has a child near by here?" the woman persisted.

Tullis heard, and lifted his voice after Robin in a desperate, drowning note. Even then the lights at The House were swallowed up. The garden sank into a darkness, and the path at their feet ran into the pitch of the den.

"Gude folk! courageous Christian cobblers!" sounded Tullis's voice, triumphing and incessant, "you can win home. The ploy is over. The gallant life over there went out wi' the lights. Awa' to your beds, and good night to you. Ha! ha! There's no one o' you worth an old shoe to mend another. Out! out! Shew! Gude night to you, and pleasant dreams."

He swept them all into the road and down the causeway. He was swirling the sweat with his fingers from under his beard, and his talk was unceasing. His gibing rigmarole followed the last of the crowd to their house-doors.

When a little later Tullis reached The House, Lisbeth had laid out the Major's body

and made up her own bundle, and was ready for the new business at Robin Cook's to which her brother called her. That is their story and the Legend. The Legend and they lied in the matter; but I see no reason to doubt the surface-truth that the Major had gone out with the lights.

Had there been any fresh terrifying occurrences that night at the stricken House, old Robin Cook must have observed them. Grey at the lips, he moved about like a dog with its bristles up, pacing his stable-yard, going out upon the high-road at the end of every round to strain his eyes for the lamps of Mr Clephane's gig with the Doctor, sometimes stepping down the brae towards St Brise to meet them, then hurrying back when he found himself out of earshot of Kirsten's cryings, fearful lest the silence meant a sad end to them. From his seeing nothing more, I conclude that there was nothing more to be seen.

An hour or two before day-break the village was sound in sleep, and Uncle James slept until the barking of the collie awakened him, and a faint step in the yard brought him to the door. By the first lifting of the October night he saw the yard empty and very quiet, save for a motion among the cows, and the collie that still held up a nose in the direction of the muir. James looked about him, but saw nothing, and went back to his bed. "I must ha' been dreaming," he said, and fell asleep.

He was sound again when Aunt Janet came in a few minutes later. Softly, and by the light of the fire only, so as not to waken him, she pulled from under the bed a kist, and from the kist took out some little bits of linen things that had been neatly folded away at the time when hope was quick, and for many a year now preserved under the dead-clothes. For the dead-clothes must find a wearer one day. As Aunt Janet knelt there with busy hands, and memory going like a shuttle, she heard the little cry of a child. For a moment, because of the work she was engaged in, it scarce surprised her; but when it was repeated she had shaken her mind clear of the fancy, and the cry came in like the twitter of the earliest bird and went straight to her heart. Janet was old now, and the longing to wake on such a cry could not have been very quick in her; yet when it came this night it came like meadow scents to beasts in June, and she held her breath for it to repeat itself upon a heart thumping with the humours of spring.

When it did come she rose quickly, and stirred the fire gently, and swung round the kettle over the flame. That confirms the character she held for level-headedness with all her softness of heart—a perfect combination in a woman, that requires no addition save a swift humour and a swift wrath to make a perfect man. Aunt Janet knew exactly where to find the child—in the milk-

house, where the uncultivated sense of James had overlooked the basket. And yet he might have noticed it, for it was not an ordinary farm-basket, but a flat shallop of wicker such as all households in villages and towns knew in these days—one in which the stuff was kept for the weavers. Into this basket Janet peeped. It was beautifully furnished, and such clothes as the child had on her and those which covered her were beautiful.

The next thing that happened was James's awakening to hear the cry of a child almost at his bedside.

"Woman, woman," cried he, "that's not my bairn?" at which it seems Janet fell to laughing. And, indeed, to a humorous eye the affairs of the morning were running on laughing lines. The child here (whosoever she was) was clothed at any rate; whereas by this time, maybe, down at Kirsten's was another child awaiting these linens. At the recollection of that, and maybe with a little pang of envy at the recollection, Aunt Janet tumbled James out of bed and into some clothes, and set him down to watch the wicker shallop and the little bundle now sleeping again in it.

"It's a gey queer thing," was all that James could utter as Janet bustled about the kitchen before setting out for Kirsten Cook's again.

With her on her return two hours later in daylight came Robin, the proud father (he was not to know the rascal he was parent to), with a brisk

step sounding the morning's triumph. He had crowed so loudly about his bairn that Janet had not found occasion to tell him of her own find. When they entered James was standing with the bundle in his hands, "handling it for all the world like a skep of bees," Janet used to say, and "it's-a-gey-queer-thinging" it up and down; but Robin had no eyes.

"It's a gey queer thing," says James at the sound of Robin's voice.

"Maybe it is," said Robin, nettled, for he had some reason for believing that James must refer to the tardy arrival at his own home. "Lor' ha' mercy!—there's a queerer," he cried, catching sight at length of the bundle in James's arms.

He fell into a kind of trotting laugh, in which James tried to pull him up.

"What are you nichering at?" he said, with an unusual briskness that only seemed to

whip up Robin's laugh the more.

"Man, it doesn't set you to handle a bairn," Robin said.

"And you," replied James, the recollection of the other event swallowed up in his present wonder,—“you haven't a bairn to handle.”

"Me not got a bairn!" cries Robin.

Somehow, with Janet's assistance, the two were brought to an understanding of the double wonder of the morning. Nothing would satisfy Robin but that James should step across to see his boy, though it were but through the window; and James went with him, and returned to his own kitchen to practise the manœuvres which he had learned from Lisbeth Tullis's management of young Robin Cook.

And thus, out of the mystery of the Sabbath night, Rab Cook and the elder Charlotte emerge, borne on the arms of the two old men.

CHAPTER II.—THE RASCAL IN BUD.

As they emerge, so they have remained for me,—wrapped in unnatural arms.

The figures of the Legend, or all save one or two of them, are scarce more than stains upon my memory—faint, legendary markings. Major MacNab, the last of that gentlemanly race, goes serenely into the black night where the invisible Pluto drives: the impression of the Legend, here, clearly transmuted by subsequent groundings in the Classical Manual

at the school in St Brise. Mirren, who lost a lover as well as a cousin when young MacNab was stuck in the Forest of Amboise, and afterwards became the Mistress of Clephane, and lies in the family vault there, still seems to me, despite the secret that was buried with her, to kneel weeping, like the angel on her sarcophagus, at her uncle's bedside. The silent old man Tullis, past whom, on the causeway in the gloaming, we children in my day slipped fur-

tively and ran, I still see flying on the business of that night which concealed a deeper crime than the smuggling of a body and some brown brandies home from France: sometimes, too, I think of his sister Christian and the young MacNab wearing him out with reproaches in the hours of dark. And always, even in the fulness of their manhood and womanhood, I see Rab, a prodigy, handled by old Robin Cook, and Charlotte, a gentle foundling, in the simple rude arms of my Uncle James.

With the Back Bowes village itself and the den, the stage and mounting for these legendary figures, it is different. Since these figures vanished from them they have been stage and mounting often for my own adventures. The first night I ever slept out of my father's house was when I visited the Setons at the Nether Bowes; and I slept many nights there then, and saw with the eye the causeway and the Den House and the black path running up from it to the cottage where Robert Tullis lived, and the beadle's garden adjoining where the Devil flew out of the currant-bushes,—all the places so familiar to my mind through the relation of the Legend. I can remember standing on the second night of my visit outside my uncle's door just as the monster dusk descended: it had swallowed up the den behind me, but in the east, where Town of Tarvit lay, a gallant cloud had thrust a sword of fire between its jaws; and first I felt a pang in thinking that

Town of Tarvit and my home lay so far away as the cloud, and then it seemed to me that the cloud was myself, and I was fighting the monster that was ready to swallow, and suddenly all the creatures of the Legend came flying out of the den, and they were the monster, and I rushed inside into Uncle James's knees, and howled because the Legend was in pursuit.

By-and-by, however, when the unnerving home-sickness was gone, the Back Bowes and the den of the Legend had disappeared. A new village and a new den had taken their place. The peat-smoked causeway was as unromantic and familiar as any street in Town of Tarvit, the Devil's gooseberry-bush was the sweetest of green gaskins, and against Robert Tullis's gable was a cricket-pitch as smooth and level as the sands of St Brise; and at the House in the den, which for some reason or other was now called Nocht, there lived a splendid man, old Mr Clephane's younger son, James Clephane, who kept pigs and ferrets and I know not how many more engaging creatures. Thus the dark shadows of the scene of the Legend were dispelled by the familiar rushlight of childhood; a day came when a younger Charlotte, my Charlotte, appeared in it, and by a wondrous alchemy it was bathed in golden sunshine.

As yet, however, that day is far off. At present, Rab and the elder Charlotte have emerged only upon this little world; and them, too, shadows and

lights and a golden blaze awaited. Then, as in my day, the houses on the causeway were set down on an irregular plan, haphazard, like the furniture and ornaments in Aunt Sarah's drawing-room in St Brise. Between those on the right (that is, if you are walking in the direction of the coast) there blaze on you patches of colour from stocks and asters and foxgloves and peony-roses in the gardens that slope to the den. The descent from these gardens, however, is dangerous, and impossible to all who have outgrown youth and suppleness, by reason of it being by perpendicular red sandstone that rises sheer from the burn-side below; every here and there, therefor, narrow black paths start off from the causeway, descending between hedges or stone dykes, under holly- and flushed rowan-bowers, and by shrewd windings find the easiest way, like burns in the hills, to the river running in the gully.

But down in the den itself! The tempered sea-breezes have kissed the sward and left their clean and perfumed breath upon it. The burn goes dancing and singing under the rock and the hill. The village sleeps on the rock; and round it night and day the tall, straight beeches, like a great company of knights, stand guard upon the hill, crowning it with their green and silver panoply. The very nomenclature of the den is sweet; many of the names of it are Scriptural—here is Jordan, here is Kedron. And all the world over there are wanderers who surprise them-

selves thinking of this chosen land, and the thought of it sweetens their sorrows with a sharp pain. You have seen it, you know it? Ah! they and I have looked on it with the eyes of a boy and a lover, and it is all the world to us!

The Back Bowes lies on the nether lip of the den, and all the mystery down there overflows and works its way among the houses. In this manner, something of size, of romance even, is imported into a village which, were it set flat upon a plain, would be too small to hide a single action, and scarce a thought or desire, from the friendly observation of every inhabitant. Not that, as it is, much is hid (though there is the case of the Legend); but that every little bit of news revealed is, as it were, a citadel stormed. For, if you are on the causeway, the intimation of something forward in the den will come to your ears with a rustle defiant and challenging, yet what exactly, or even in any manner, it is, is denied to the eyes until you have run down one of the pathways to the den and fought to the innermost keep and guard-room of the event. On the other hand, the watchful eye of one in the den will see signs of commotion in the village: the quick passage of heads over the top of the low wall that skirts the gaps among the houses, a rapid clearance from the gardens of straw hats and bonnets that a minute before were bobbing over spades and hoes and amongst currant-bushes, or the disappearance of

those who worked in a part of the den nearer these heralds of the unwonted; and in that case he must fly up the pathways if he is to share the early spoils of causeway news. And all through the year, and all day long, these challenges and sallies are going on between the village and the den, which are separated by two minutes if you are on the descending paths, and by thrice as many if you are on the ascending: either of them a greater space of time than you might think, for I have known Rab Quick's bull-dog dispose of three of Laird Thallon's prize bantams in less time than it took Rab to run down the causeway and pull him off by the tail. And no doubt it was the same when Rab was all ignorant of bull-dogs (if ever there was such a time) and Charlotte was crying for Aunt Janet to take her out of Uncle James's clumsy hands.

Although my Uncle and Aunt Seton and old Robin Cook are rather misty figures in my memory, and greatly coloured by the Legend, still I knew enough of them in childhood to understand the circle at the Nether Bowes, the world within the little world, into which Rab and Charlotte emerged. At the heart of it was my aunt, a fair, not unhandsome woman, even when I knew her, with a white show of teeth, and distinguished by a grave reserve of presence and conduct. I see her now in her light blue shawl, and stuff gown, and the plum-coloured petticoat with the leaf pattern of

her own working: she was remarked for a particular skill in needlework acquired under the Leddy Charlotte in the den. Janet Seton came of a superior stock, and carried the badge of race upon her features, and she was a sweet woman: so sweet indeed that the foolish question never quite died on Back Bowes' lips, "However did she marry James?" James was hard-grained and knotty, and extraordinarily stupid, among other things for which he got less credit; his figure was lanky, and he looked broken at the knees; he had a face coloured like a haw, with a fine and stupid nose over smooth and well-shaped lips like many women's. Janet ought to have wed a man who farmed a bit of his own land at the least, her neighbours thought; and I say that she was good enough for any Clephane or the like in the countryside, though far be it from me to encourage a misalliance—least of all with a Clephane. As it was, she married my stupid uncle, who rented an acre or two from the Clephanes at the Nether Bowes, and kept a few cows and a pony and pigs and hens, and assuredly should not have kept them long but for her management. This I will say for my uncle: his recognition of Janet's worth was even greater than her superiority. He was very cock-sure as well as stupid, especially when he had been to St Brise market and fell upon an argument in the homecoming; but never so with

Janet. To her he deferred in everything, always (if she were present) rounding off his remarks with a "But ask Janet—she knows," until, as we have seen, that became a by-word in the village.

My sharpest impression of Robin Cook, again, apart from that memorable appearance in the Legend, was made at my earliest meeting with him. It was on a Sunday night, when I had followed my uncle through the paddock to the hedge between the two houses, and to my uncle's greeting across it, "Well, and were you at the kirk to-day, Robin?"

"That was I," Robin answered, "and an excellent preceptor we had, too!"

He was a fiery and mercurial man, with a most honest and prodigal heart. In calm moments he looked out upon all things humorously, even upon music, his love of which was a passion. As not infrequently is the case with that passion, it was regarded by his neighbours as a misfortune—a ne'er-do-well in the family of his virtues. I myself play a tune upon the fiddle, in modest fashion, and have at times felt a strange working of the inwards on hearing a fine performer. But Robin would sit uplifted night after night while his bow and a neighbour's ran a hurdle-race over the bars of a Highland reel. The harmonies of "Old Hundred" labouring through the rafters of the Parish Kirk filled his soul with joy: that was his own expression. I have frequently observed that there is no fer-

vour like the man's who can put in a good bass; but Robin could not do that. He had neither voice nor ear. As his graceless son said, he was a poor singer before the Lord. His execution upon the fiddle, again, suffered from a coarseness of ear, and from fingers crooked in patching and stitching the small-clothes of some generations of the Back Bowes—"there's a hantle o' wolfs on my father's strings," Rab said—and it was marred further by a mistaken idea that all virtue in the instrument lay in speed. There lived in Fife one Mike Runciman, lamed in a foot and an eye,—a true fiddler whom young Rab Cuick named Twangdillo. It was one of Rab's stories that at his father's entreaty Mike once tramped to the Back Bowes, bringing with him his precious "Duke" (it had a "Duke" back, at any rate), upon which he made Robin happy for a whole night, and that afterwards Robin wrote to Mike asking him to send him the music of the last tune he played: "he would know which one he meant," Robin wrote, "for it went like this—*Tum, tum, tiddle-diddle, tum-tum.*" I certainly remember Mike, almost weeping, say to my uncle, who did not pretend to understand his grief—

"Robin Cook a fiddler! Man, he's aye glad if he's over the page before ye!"

Yet despite Mike Runciman, and his own son Rab, and my inability to fathom its nature, Robin had a passion for music. That in him, somewhere, the soul of music lay, and that his

physical disqualifications, in making it breathe, were perhaps his good fortune, are two things that find countenance in the career of his son Rab, who had the sweetest voice and the finest execution upon the fiddle and the most callous heart of any man whom I have ever known.

This was the circle in which Robin Cook's son and Aunt Janet's foundling were brought up, hand-in-hand almost. They tumbled about the causeway together, worked for the same farmer in the summer vacation, and left school and started on the business of life on the morning of the same day, which was at the end of a white harvest thirteen years after they were born. Rab apprenticed himself to his father in the small cloth-shop, and Charlotte took up the work in the Back Bowes kitchen, where the frailness of my uncle and aunt made her help very necessary.

There was another respect, or so I think, in which Rab and Charlotte continued to be brought together. Fate had associated them in worldly introduction and condition, but Nature had been beforehand in working them in complementary moulds. Every man and woman in the village had his and her roughnesses and odd corners and queer gradations of character; yet to unperceptive eyes, and really in the main, they were much of a muchness. Whereas Rab was singularly apart from everybody in the Bowes, and Charlotte, of a truth, was not of it at all. This exception, in

a manner, would have paired them, even had not their variation from the common been of the same nature. Nay, when I remember that she was the picture of my Charlotte, as we know who have seen mother and daughter together, I will not allow that there was any likeness between Rab Cuick and her. After all, it needed only their being distinguished, which is an exhilarating and morally bracing thing, to associate them. Charlotte had a more delicate nature, as certainly she had a more delicate configuration, than her girl neighbours; even as my Charlotte has, else how could I describe the mother. And Rab—— Men in every condition of life have explained Rab in the same phrase. He had a streak of genius, they said. Genius is not a thing I understand, but I could not esteem it so lightly as to have it explain the viciousness of Rab Cuick. He was, it is true, a very efficient man, yet withal a man of most unnatural ill-doing. That is how the sense of him as a prodigy is kept fresh in my mind.

Of Rab, up to this point, however, few things have come down to me, and none that concerns Charlotte. It was later than this that his voice ripened; and about the rare gift coupled with his name from an early age, his skill upon the fiddle,—his father's fiddle, which old Robin none the less eagerly touched now, though his son's dexterity put his practice to shame rather,—the village tradition holds nothing that is discriminating. I catch

a glimpse of the man I knew so well in somebody's recollection of Rab's display in school of acquaintance with affairs in the bigger world outside — of the scraps of information which he might have picked up in the newspapers and in books, had there been any for him to read ; and there is the very man himself in the boy who spent half his free time with the queer man Tullis, and the other half by himself, gathering the woodland lore and the knowledge of beasts of all kinds and birds and fish, in which surely none ever surpassed him. The prodigy again : with something of wild nature in him that was alien to humanity. The Misses Justice used to tell, with much shaking of their ringlets, how they would have kept a class in their dining-room on Sunday nights, but had to give it up because Rab incited the others to steal the beans on their way home through the garden. The ladies told this to account for his lapses later ; but I daresay the story is just as common as boys and beans. More to the point is the other of Rab and Mr Borrowman of the Parish Kirk, which gave rise to the saying in the Bowes, "It's a Borrowman privilege," when any one claimed more for himself than he granted to his neighbours. At the Bible-class which Rab attended with the others, Mr Borrowman, a pompous empty body, was always harping on the uncertainty of life, and "God willing" before his intimations for future meetings. Once, being tortured with a toothache, he dismissed

them, saying that he would defer his remarks until the next Sabbath ; whereupon Rab —

"D'ye hear him, lads. He's well off to ha'e a next Sabbath : he'll ne'er allow us one !"

There is here perhaps a premonition of the strange horror of death which Rab always discovered. But that which I should most like to know about his early days is whether he made his fellows uneasy in their hearts and consciences, as undoubtedly he made men, when he grew up. That was why my Uncle James never liked the lad. In my legacy of family history are many stories of how Rab baited James : bringing him from his bed by simulating his calf bleating at the other end of the paddock, for example, or sending him home to Janet with a prodigious story of a lamb dropped at the first touch of winter, for he had heard its pitiful cry over on the quarry hill as plain as man could hear it, and fooling the stupid man in a hundred ways, but generally by the exercise of these wonderful lips and tongue and throat of his ; yet James would rather have been enticed over three parishes on such a fool's errand than have an hour of Rab's conversation as they all sat round the fire. The moment Rab came in James began to fidget on his chair, never taking his eye off the laddie, watching for his damned innuendoes, and then he would rise and go out, leaving Rab chatting with Aunt Janet and Charlotte with a laugh in his words.

At length Rab's apprentice-

ship with his father ran out, and Eben Smith, the tailor in St Brise, who supplied Robin with most of his cloth-stuff, offered him a place in his workshop. On the eve of his departure Rab stepped across to the Nether Bowes to say good-bye to them all—a natural thing to do and a neighbourly, even keeping Charlotte out of the count. Of course, he was to be back in the village every Sunday, and doubtless already they had laid their plans for meeting in the Silver Wood; still, St Brise was the bigger world, and people are wise to say “good-bye” when they step into any bigger world, though it should be no farther off than the other side of the street.

Uncle James was very full of that view at the parting, and said to him by way of advice—

“Don’t set too much store upon your fiddle, Rab.”

“I’m thinking we all play a bit upon fiddles,” Rab answered him.

“Hoots! Your father skirls now and then,” says James, not catching his meaning.

“‘Skirls’ is the word,” answers Rab, “and ye maun have a nice ear yourself, Mr Seton, to name so well the pair display he makes o’t. But I was meaning other instruments for-bye catgut,” continues the impudent laddie.

“And what are they?” says James, almost briskly, while my Aunt Janet was ready to break in upon their bicker.

“Oh! religious differences and mash for kye,” answers Rab, touching upon two instru-

ments that my uncle was very fond of playing a stave on, especially when returning from St Brise market.

I believe that my uncle’s mind was wholly set against the lad from that moment; and Janet had her misgivings. She could not but guess that there lay something between Charlotte and Rab; but being nearer their calibre than any other in the village, by nature partly, and partly by affectionate study of the girl (who was hers and yet not hers), she divined that whatever was between them was grounded on the fact of their being uncoss in the village, and that to emphasise Rab’s strange qualities would be to attract Charlotte’s. For even so early as this she had noticed a proud mouth in the girl she had to drive.

So now she interposed, having already signalled the farewell visit by casting off a certain distant manner with which, at most times, she met Rab—the only sign she gave of noticing his conduct to my uncle.

“We would be glad to have you stay, Rab,” she said; “but we mustn’t forget that your father has first claim on you this night.”

Rab, with a clever eye, drew a deal of assurance from her unbending, and still more from her next words—

“When you are at the door, Charlotte, just bring in the washing things that are on the hedge.”

“Guid night, Mr Seton,” says Rab; and my uncle gave him

his cold hand. But Aunt Janet's shake had a kind of entreaty in it, as she sent him after Charlotte.

I know the girl to have been like her daughter, according to all folks' words. My Charlotte was like a lily among poppies: if her mother was like that, there was no man brisker than Rab Cuick to see it. He had the gift of keen senses: little good it did him. Yet I think that, though he had had ten sharp eyes for his two, had he been in love with this girl whom he was leaving, he ought to have forgotten all else save that. Whereas he noted how she had gone white and was shaking in the first blast of passion as she waited for him outside, and that her face shone to his, transparent, in the soft light of the autumn night. Ay! he noted these things, and he remembered them, for it was from his unmanly lips that I learned them; and how, when he would have left her with the promise of meeting each Sunday in the Sil'er Wood, she had flung herself into his arms, and with a "Stay a minute, Rab," discovered her heart, discovered it to him by her girl's weakness; and he kept it for years, and then brought it out in a gibe when his own daughter seemed to have a secret to match it.

Young Richard Clephane had a way of accounting for Rab's heartlessness, and even of justifying it. "The artist's

temperament must be given the whole world to experiment with — especially women," he would say. You have pricked that bubble for yourself, Mr Richard Clephane, likewise of the artist's temperament. To the same end was the saying of the woman who bore the smart of all the ill it was designed to cover. "Rab was aye fond of his fiddle," I have heard his wife say often: and from her lips, in love, must have come this other patch in the history of that night handed down to me. After Rab had left her at Uncle James's hedge-side, she could not return to the house at once, but must travel to the garden end again, and even far into the paddock towards Robin's cottage. Rab would be there by this time. O! happy Robin to have Rab! And listen! she heard the bow strike the strings. The music got to her heart, and because it did, she knew that it was Rab who played, not Robin. It was a sprightly air: how could he play so when he had just given her good-bye for days? But he had not gone straight to it to express his feelings, she said to herself: they had been callous feelings if that air expressed them. No, she remembered, this was the air he was practising, and she condemned her own disappointment with her "Rab was aye fond of his fiddle."

To me, that shows his callousness more than ever.

CHAPTER III.—THE CAST SHOE.

In making so much of his callant peccadilloes, perhaps I am too hard upon the man. I know him, I cannot forgive him; yet I might be merciful until I come to his maturer ill-doing, and for it even there may be found some measure of excuse.

This Eben Smith's shop was not a likely place for a lad to improve in, least of all a lad of Rab's calibre. It went like an inn; and not so much like an inn as like some small house of call at the cross-roads. The manner of life which it betokened had disappeared before I came to know St Brise; but, as I have heard from men of that generation, Eben's shop sheltered all the frolicsome spirits of the town. I conceive it to have been a change-house of much waggy and ready wit: it is no great title to honour for it or for Rab Cuick that all his days he was a credit to its curriculum. There is, too, in the profession of a tailor, for which Rab was in training, an incitement to nimbleness of wits; the very attitude of the tailor is apish, and suggestive of the tricky. Eben Smith was a man of small proportions of body, with a big head and neck, and a grey and even manly beard. As he sat in front of his bench he had a busy way with him that pervaded the whole room. He was a good workman, I am persuaded, who amused himself with his visitors, keeping a shrewd eye on the main chance the while, and upon their follies. If one of

them, as happened more or less to all, fell away from respectability (I cannot say from virtue), he had no mercy. Such an one might have been in the habit of coming about Eben's shop for half a lifetime, and counting on Eben's friendship; but once he was in a hole, it was good-bye to him. Eben had not a finger to his aid, nor, it appeared, the thought of lifting one. Here was a school in which the two chief lessons taught were ready-wit and callousness; and Rab, it must be said, learned his lessons.

Most of this I have gathered from those who had matriculated at that school; for the greater part, from those who had graduated in it. All sorts and conditions attended on it, for their amusement. There was one set—I will not say the most lovable—who matriculated, and took such classes as they chose. They took their bite, and flung the rest away. But there were others, studious frequenters, upon whom the spirit of the place took hold. Many of them were honest and gentle, without self-seeking, and without grit,—so hardly must all virtue be snatched. The homeliness, and the apparent generousness of the place, were virtuous in their eyes uncorrected by any ambitions: so ignorant were they of life, so ignorant of themselves. And thus, for want of buckling to of character, even imperfect, they became wastrels; yet it was these poor devils who entertained me by the hour with

tales of Rab's wit and waggersy, and of his beautiful voice that was just then forming after the cracking, and of Eben's ill-concealed enjoyment of them, and his sharp fling of the garment he was sewing at each audacious sally. They clung, like any woman, to the cause of their ruin, it was easy to see, and would tell the story of their soul's damnation in dribblets for a small carouse.

That was Rab's day-school: and, ill as it was, the night-school which he began to attend was worse. For one thing, it was of a meaner social condition (for Eben's could boast of the genteelest company); and for another, it was unaccompanied by the semblance of work. On his first coming to St Brise, Rab lodged very straitly with an honest woman in the East Port, in the teneement in which he took up house later (as you shall hear), and in the very flat, if I mistake not. Had not the woman been honest he must have gone bankrupt, or not fed, so meagre were the winnings to which he had to lay his way. Amusements and amusing company, or such at any rate as had to be paid for, were beyond him then. For companion after the day's work was done he had his fiddle, and he made wonderful strides to its heart. If a string or two were gone beyond mending, there was nothing for it but to lay the instrument aside, or to play Paganini on such as remained, until he could afford to buy new ones; and as often as not he compassed that by saving a meal, appeasing his

hunger with a guddled trout, or, that failing, rambling in the woods, where haws and berries will stay a stomach if nothing better offers, and sometimes even being content with feeding his eyes on all the doings at the harbour and on the shore.

As he said, often in these days he played himself the tune that the old cow died of.

This sparing life, however, did not last long: not longer than it took for his skill on the fiddle and his song and his waggish turn to get abroad, with a corresponding slackening of his morals. All three were introductions to those who had less wit, and more money, and a greater practice in ill ways of acquiring it; and they earned him many a night of jollity that cost him nothing. Herein, even if in nothing else, there was a decline: to set yourself to amuse and to be paid for it is not a manly exercise; and to me it seems still less manly if, as was the case with Rab, you take it with your head high in the air.

There was a steeper decline than this, of course, discovered by later events to be set down in their proper place, which is only a few pages off; but at this time, save these on the down-path with him, no one ever guessed it, not even my father, although he came to persuade himself that he had known it all the time.

I do not lay great stress upon Rab's poaching. God made him with a little quick, beady eye like a bird's, and a

throat and teeth and lips that could imitate any sound in the woods, and a mind like a pointer-dog. All the days I knew him, he never said to me bird or flower; but, then, he always thought little of me, and indeed I knew nothing about the fields. He kept all his fine craft for them who had a touch of the craft themselves, even as, save when he could wound your feelings, he kept all his wit for witty ears. But (so I have heard) "Birdy" More, who was reckoned the finest stuffer north of the Forth, and had work sent to him from England sometimes, would get hints from Rab for his nicest jobs—hints, it seems, about the pose of the birds, which "Birdy" had not the imagination to come at himself, but only the knowledge to approve. The Postmaster in the Bowes, who was a poet, and had some verses in *Blelach's Journal* almost every week, said to me once, and I will never forget the fulness of his voice as he said it—

"He's a fine mind, Rab Cuick, though he's a bad body."

Certainly, Rab was a fine talker; yet there was another, and wiser, man in the village who said of him that it did one ill to hear him.

There was no wrong in Rab's woodcraft. What was it, if not that, that led him to the discovery of coal on Clephane, years later? I lay no stress upon his poaching, which was done for the love of it and not for the gain. But, even so, poaching is a road with a hang to ill company, and it brought

Rab into the clutches of Black Veitch, who was the great smuggler of that day on our coast. Into Black Veitch's clutches, do I say? It brought two rascals together, to the loss of honest men: there never was a man who could boast of having Rab in his clutches. My father, in the Excise, used to say that from about this time smuggling on the St Brise shore became a fine art. Well I know who the artist was!

As yet, however, all this was known to none, not even to my father, and least of all to the Cooks and Setons in the Back Bowes. Rab was not obviously vicious. Until the very end of his life, drink had no hold upon him: he was too proud and careful of his wits. With women he had a way, but not the libertine's. He treated them as he treated men, and debauched their minds as he debauched men's: it did them, also, ill to hear him. He must have amassed, somehow, a considerable amount of money at this time: it was now, I suppose, that he laid in those reserves upon which he was to draw for long; but he never flung his siller about so freely as to arouse questions. A discreet mind might have suspected so strange and rapid a popularity; but it was wafted to the Bowes in a pleasant repute of "well-doing and well-liked" which made his friends happy. It satisfied even James Seton, who never unduly lamented corroboration of ill-doing that himself had prophesied. James judged Rab

mainly by his regular appearances in the village on Sunday mornings, which entailed early rising and a walk of seven miles, and at the end of them three hours on a hard pew, before breaking fast. My uncle and aunt were too frail now to walk into St Brise on Sundays, so they sent Charlotte there, and were content themselves with the big Bible in the kitchen; saving on Sacrament Sundays, when the pony was yoked, and they all drove into the town together. Thus James was in a fine position to mark Rab's regular arrival on Sunday. At the moment of them, Charlotte ought to have been close upon St Brise, for she made an early start. She should have passed Rab on the road somewhere above the town on the hill of Cluny. But she did not. Rab always was in the Silver Wood a full hour before his appearance in the Back Bowes, and so always had time for more than a passing word with Charlotte before she struck the highroad, which she contrived to do in front of the other worshippers who tramped from the Bowes to St Brise. But James Seton knew nothing of this Silver Wood dalliance, howsoever Janet may have guessed at it.

Things went on in this way for three or four years. As my uncle and aunt grew older, Charlotte became more and more of a comfort to them. The girls in the Back Bowes had ripe and moist affections; but an overflowing heart does not mean a delicate sense, whereas breeding does, and

Charlotte joined a delicate handling to a ripe heart. Nevertheless, as I have hinted, in one respect Charlotte gave them some uneasiness, which in all likelihood a daughter of their own would not have caused. She was not irreligious. Poor woman: she died with all her affections crying out in love for the man who scourged them through a lifetime; and, I take it, that is the last claim that will be set aside in Heaven. In her young days, however, and perhaps always (else she could not have been so forgiving with so little reservation), her nature had a kind of contempt for narrow, accidental moralities and for the Puritanic attitude. There is no saying how far she might have gone in scorn had not it been for Janet, who, withal her rigid creed, had a saving womanliness. Perhaps the little weakness, on market-days and holidays, of the righteous James acted as a restraint. But although the virtues and follies of this good couple kept a bearing-rein on her nature's lightness (as they would have called it), now and then she ran off—and once, to the hurt of all their lives.

It was a beautiful, bright Sabbath morning; and when as usual Charlotte met Rab in the Silver Wood, they found it hard to leave the greenery and the kind shimmer and beauty of it. I do not know if they tried diligently to overcome the hardness: at any rate, it was very human not to succeed. I am not going to tell you what they said to each other, that

day in the den, with the sun shining down from a clear sky upon them, and shining through a little cloud of their own consciences' creating. I am not going to tell you, because I cannot; and that not only because I do not know, but because, also, a man shapes every love-story into his own, and the time for telling of my own Charlotte has not come yet. They lingered in the wood, there, with never a soul to remind them that it was not the whole world and they the only persons in it, when the tinkling of the church bell, rising in the air, as if a cloud of earth-heat were to sing as it rose, quite near them, rung them into their senses. Even then, because of a new relationship, which just a look or a word will breed (and in their case, bred by many words and looks), they could not disentangle altogether, but must see each other a bit on the way, back and forwards; which is much like tampering with conscience in its manner, and a poor method of progress in its results in any way.

So the Back Bowes bell had rung itself out, with a gasping, dying finish common to hand-rung bells, when Rab approached the village. James Seton had been seated on the low dyke at the end of the garden, and as the last strokes came was walking up the garden towards the house, when he turned sharp at the unexpected sound of a whistle. Presently the whistle changed into a voice, which came lilting up the den very sweetly—like a woman's, thought James,

surprised by it into a sudden pleasure which he might have entertained on any day save the Sabbath. By this time the bell had ceased, and the swish and rustle caused by late-comers and those with an urgent anecdote or argument in the kirkyard had died down. The village was a dead quiet, the very sunshine laid all sounds; so that Rab's voice—for there was none save Rab with a voice whose mere humming could take the air as this voice took it—broke upon the village as loudly as the first psalm in the kirk, and much more siccary, I am sure. And while it lasted (for it was a snatch only, at the most, which could not be held in by him, because of all that Charlotte had said and looked in the den that morning) it made quite a stir, as many white mutches in the doorways testified; and even Janet came out and joined James in the garden at the sound. And there was Rab, emerging from the pathway as usual, the stave silent upon his lips now, and his step to the kirk-door specially clean and smart because of his being late by some quarter of an hour.

How carefully has my legacy preserved the kernel of this history! See how it is linked bit by bit by the pity of it! I can hear again Rab's voice lilting up from the den in a simple stave, to you and to me a sensation of joy, but in the hearts of that faithful couple echoing a nameless terror. I see them going about, listening to it in their hearts, and pretending to each other to have

heard nothing, and Rab, the cause of it all, supping his kail with his family with a gay spoon, and setting forth to St Brise again with a light foot; and Charlotte, the while, with all her life just at the shaping.

When Rab left her this morning, she set out for St Brise at a run, with conscience laying on the stick. Long ere she came to the hill of Cluny, within sight of the town, her feet were blistered, so that she ran almost on her toes; yet she never thought of putting on her shoes till then, so binding is custom. When at length she sat down on the customary green knowe and tied them, and pushed back the tousled wisps of hair out of her eyes, wondering if she would be presentable when she reached the kirk, and how far on the service would be ere she did reach it, her eyes fell on the Firth beyond the town, and on an outward-bound ship upon it. She had seen the sea, thus, fifty times a-year, and the ships upon it, and thought no more about them: to-day, somehow, at the sight she forgot her blistered feet, and the kirk, and she forgot herself, and skipped down the hill with love at her heart and a godless, happy ballad on her lips.

St Brise, as Charlotte passed through it and wound down one of its narrow closes to the sea, shimmered in the sun. The tide was far out, and the beach hummed under the blue sky. Charlotte took off her shoes and stockings again, packing each stocking into its shoe and slinging them over her shoulders, and bathed the blistered feet in

the little waves, and in this delicious exercise moved slowly to the harbour. That was a new sensation to her: the ships, the sea, the salt sting of romance, the surprise at seeing all the things of which Rab had told her. From the harbour she wandered farther east, to the old and grey ruin, and scrambled over the rocks at its base, in awe and wonder, to the cove beyond. Her heart, it seems, was like a bird, and light and soaring: the sunlight lay on it, and on the sea, and on the great rocks, topped with bent and tree.

And so, at every step almost, she burst out into a little snatch of song; and as she sang it was always Rab's snatches, because as yet she was no great singer herself, and Rab was the only one almost in the Back Bowes who did sing; and because she was in love with Rab. And so she came to the yellow rocks,—rocks the like of which I have never seen elsewhere, save in some old paintings of foreign parts, and never see in them or here on the St Brise shore without a lift in my blood. Perhaps that is why Charlotte, as she approached them, began to sing Rab's favourite air. Even I, who am like a crow in my voice, have seemed to sing like a lintie at sight of them.

She had sung her stave, just a snatch of melody as Rab would have sung it, and was silent in a moment, when out of the wooded rock came Rab's signal of the sea-gull. All surprised, out of her joy, she gave back the *ki-ak*, as she might have given it back in the Silver

Wood; and looking up unconsciously for Rab, as she did always when the *ki-ak* was sounded between them, there rose from the undergrowth a black-a-vised man. For a moment they stood gazing at each other, she on her bare feet on the sand, and he half hidden in the bents upon the rocks above her; and then she turned and ran. From point to point of the bay is not more than two hundred yards, and the sand was clean and flat under foot. In her flight the ribbons of her shoes, which slung them over her shoulders, came loose, and the shoes flew asunder: one she caught in the swing of her arm as she ran; the other was flung a yard or two off upon the sand. She reined herself up to turn for it, when behind her, again, the sea-gull's note sounded, twice this time, and from the wood alongside of her pushed out another man, younger and better favoured than the first, as she noted in the glance of her eye; and without waiting to pick up her shoe, she raced this man for the point. And because she had the start of him, being in a straight line with the tail of the rocks, and was supple, and he had a yard or two of growth to push through ere he could clear his feet, she reached the

turn first, and when, half-way along the next bay, she looked back, there was no one to be seen, and she stood to ease the stitch in her side.

As she stood there panting, the sound of the kirk bells for the afternoon service, which she had designed to attend, hummed along the shore. Then she remembered the shoe she had left on the shore round the bend. It seems that what she thought was—the Back Bowes training was strong in her—that the man, whosoever he was, would pick it up, and there would be a clue to the Sabbath-breaker.

There was nothing for it but to set off for the Back Bowes from where she was, without so much as entering a kirk-door. She slipped through St Brise, bare-footed, and with a hot face, for all that the streets were empty, and she did not meet a soul; being ashamed of her nakedness, now that she had an extra bad conscience for her ill-doing, and, moreover, was like to be found out. And so, having tarried in the Silver Wood again until the kirk-folk from St Brise appeared in their home-coming on the hill beyond it, which, happily for her, was as the gloaming fell, she arrived at the Back Bowes very miserable, and with only one shoe upon her back.

(*To be continued.*)

"PUSH" LARRIKINISM IN AUSTRALIA.

SCARCELY a decade has elapsed since the police authorities of New South Wales found it necessary to arm the city constabulary with revolvers, and to intrust its officers, moreover, with a wide discretion in the use of their weapons. For more than a quarter century before that time larrikinism had flourished almost unchecked, and all the larger Australian cities had suffered under a curious species of tyranny exercised by bands of reprobates who, under the leadership of "kings," were leagued together in secret communities called "pushes," for the purpose of warring more or less openly upon the reputable classes of society.

So daring at one time had these pushes grown, and so contemptuous of the power of the police, that they frequently committed, and often with impunity, criminal outrages in open daylight, and it was notorious that the districts which they inhabited were after nightfall dangerous alike to police and private citizen. Taking Sydney as an example, certain portions of that city—notably Miller's Point, Woolloomooloo, Pyrmont, and parts of both Balmain and Leichhardt—have been for so many years regarded as lawless and disreputable suburbs, that even to this moment few respectable persons would dare to venture there after sundown. The police were formerly just as

fearful, and powerless, because armed only with truncheons, weapons which the larrikins regarded with insolent amusement; they were accustomed to patrol such districts in company, and even so were often roughly handled, and sometimes brutally murdered.

When a larrikin was arrested and brought to trial he boldly proclaimed his connection with the push to which he belonged, and unless charged with a felony, the presiding magistrate frequently exhibited an inclination to take a lenient view of his offence, and the police, in sympathy, pressed only languidly for a conviction, fearing, no doubt, the vengeance of the push.

In the case of a felony a similar terrorism was exercised, and at the assizes juries were frequently induced to return verdicts favourable to the accused. Numbers of criminals also escaped punishment for lack of evidence against them; for very few private individuals dared to bear witness against a member of a push, and thus incur the certain hatred of a class whose methods were secret, whose hearts were strangers to remorse, and whose vengeance was known to be implacable.

Public opinion was aroused in condemnation of these ruffians by degrees so amazingly gradual that more than a quarter century passed before any adequate measure of re-

form was instituted to suppress the evil. The culminating-point was, however, reached, and the last straw laid upon the back of the stupidly tolerant camel, in consequence of a heroic but futile attempt on the part of the police to arrest a push battle while in progress one Sunday afternoon in a place called Allen's Wood, situated on the outskirts of Leichhardt, about five miles from the city of Sydney.

It might be remarked in preface that a bitter rivalry often exists between two different pushes, which finds expression in a yearly or bi-yearly combat between them, the members of either society being armed with sticks and stones. On such occasions they fight a pitched battle until one side is completely routed, and not infrequently individuals are killed or seriously injured.

The police having gained intelligence of a particularly savage encounter, were ordered at all hazards to prevent it. Arriving on the scene too late for that, they rushed fearlessly upon the combatants and succeeded in capturing eleven of the larrikins in the surprise of their first rush. The pushes, however, sank for the moment their private quarrel, and amalgamated to engage the common enemy. After an hour's struggle three of the police fell desperately wounded, and the remainder, finding themselves outmatched, fled for their lives, taking with them, however, two prisoners. There ensued the extraordinary spectacle of two score blue-coats running like

hares before a mob of yelling lads, not one of whom could have been more than twenty-two years of age. After a hard chase they reached and entered a steam-tram, the driver of which immediately sent his engine full speed citywards. The pushes, eager to rescue their comrades, followed for half a mile, battering the cars with showers of stones, but were then distanced. No further arrests were made, and the prisoners were sentenced to a ridiculously trivial punishment.

This affair, nevertheless, excited such a storm of public indignation that the authorities were at last constrained to adopt stringent measures. Very shortly afterwards the police were armed, and legislation was introduced to extend and render more severe a statutory criminal code, already the most complete and drastic in the civilised world—a code which constitutes nine separate offences capital crimes, and punishes lesser felonies with flogging, solitary confinement, and penal servitude. Only with the greatest difficulty, however, was the Ministry then in power able to carry the bill. The pushes bestirred themselves, and it was soon made manifest that they possessed astonishing political influence, for the bill was bitterly contested during its passage through both Houses of Parliament. But it became law, and for a time thereafter society appeared to absolutely triumph. The constabulary were allowed to traverse the most turbulent neighbourhoods

without molestation, and push outrages grew not only less frequent but diminished daily in significance.

The pushes, notwithstanding, were unfortunately repressed rather than suppressed. They changed their tactics without abandoning their dispositions. For their ancient insolence and methods of open violence they substituted habits of cowardice and cunning. Persecution — and they were persecuted, for the police, once armed, seized upon the opportunity of reprisals with ferocious energy — served to develop both their resources and intelligence, and to inspire their ranks with a spirit of martyrdom, cohesion, and pertinacity.

Within a very few years they displayed symptoms of reviving animation; but so adroitly are all their depredations conducted under the new *régime* that the police are rarely able to determine the exact authorship of their crimes. No longer are the bodies of their victims to be discovered lying mangled and lifeless in some lonely nook or deserted thoroughfare, but men suddenly disappear from the face of the earth, leaving no sign or clue to explain the cause of their evanishment.

The pushes, moreover, having realised the importance of their numerical power politically applied, lost little time in turning the discovery to their own advantage, and so great has now become their address that any candidate for parliamentary honours who is announced for election in a push district is made immediately aware, how-

ever vaguely, that he has been approved or discarded as that push's *protégé*.

In the one case his meetings are orderly and well attended. Hints are conveyed to him as to the alteration or modification of certain planks of his platform — hints which, if desirous of return, he unreservedly adopts. He is then at liberty to shake hands with himself, and, if a poor man, should mortgage his possessions in order to raise funds sufficient to indemnify certain publicans, whose names are whispered in his ear by some passing breeze, for their generosity in supplying their regular customers for a stated period with free drinks, being well assured he will presently be in a position to redeem his pledged belongings from his salary of £300 per annum as member of the Legislative Assembly of his country. On the other hand, the rejected candidate has a very trying time indeed. His meetings are disorderly and uproarious, he is never allowed a fair hearing except under strong police protection, and at such occasions respectable persons, fearing rioting, are conspicuous solely from their absence. Such a candidate, however extensive his general popularity, however noteworthy his personal qualifications, is seldom, almost never, returned.

There exists between the various pushes and the police a feeling of mutual and remorseless animosity. The police are keenly alive to the fact that the pushes regard them as their natural enemies, creatures to be

mocked, derided, and assaulted whenever a favourable opportunity arises. In return they revenge themselves when they can, and their methods are often unjustifiably severe. They invade the push districts at regular intervals armed and in force, and arrest larrikins on the most trivial pretexts, using the absurd colonial law of vagabondage as excuse when all others fail. They treat their prisoners when captured with gross and unnecessary cruelty, with the idea of provoking resistance, in which case they are sure of securing exemplary convictions.

Many daring attempts have been made by different constables to worm their way into the confidence of the pushes, and to become accredited members thereof in the hope of acquiring their secrets, and thus obtaining a lever which might be used in disbanding or finally suppressing them. Skilled detectives have been specially imported, commissioned and recommissioned for this purpose; but the prescience of the pushes is so remarkable that no such efforts have resulted in success, the police have never penetrated the circle of observed secrecy, and are to-day as ignorant of the interior organisation of these societies as they are puzzled to explain the reason that the pushes continue to flourish and increase in power in spite of systematic opposition and positive oppression.

I was brought into personal contact with push larrikinism

for the first time a few years ago, and under the following circumstances. Strolling late one evening down Elizabeth Street, Sydney, I observed a constable accost, arrest, handcuff, and then violently assault a young man who appeared to me to be quite inoffensively proceeding along the pavement in the direction of Belmore Park. The man offered no resistance, but in spite of that the policeman threw him to the ground and struck him over the head with his mace. Disgusted at such causeless brutality, I ventured to offer a remonstrance, but was intemperately informed that if I did not mind my own business I should be similarly treated. A life-long resident in Sydney, I was sufficiently acquainted with police methods to be aware that further intervention would only lead to my own discomfiture. I therefore continued my journey without remark, but on the following morning visited the Central Police Court, anxious to discover with what crime the man I had seen arrested had been charged.

To my surprise I found he was accused of vagrancy, of having no lawful visible means of support, of being a suspicious character, of loitering, and finally of assaulting an officer in the execution of his duty. The prosecuting constable pressed these charges with the venom of an experienced perjurer, and assured the bench that he had only succeeded in arresting the accused after a desperate encounter, in which his uniform had been torn. In due course

I demanded to be sworn, and my version of the affair brought about the immediate discharge of the prisoner and, I believe, the subsequent dismissal of that constable from the public service of the colony.

Not long afterwards I discovered that the man I had befriended was "king" of the largest and most important push society in Australia, an institution which is, in fact, the oldest of its kind, and the parent and model of all other pushes. The king lost no time in approaching and assuring me of his gratitude, a sentiment he strove subsequently to substantiate by appointing me solicitor to his push—a position I was induced to assume as much from motives of curiosity as from any hope of profit; for at that period, in common with the majority of Australians, I believed larrikins to be as poor and improvident a class as they are unquestionably illiterate, brutal, and ignorant. During the succeeding three years I not only realised this idea to have been a complete error, but I gained as extended and intimate an acquaintance with push laws, habits, objects, organisation, crimes, methods, and ambitions as though I had served for that period as at least an initiate of the society. The information thus acquired *could not be made use of while I resided in Australia*, but it is the aim of this article to place before the world the result of my investigations.

The genesis of gregarious larrikinism is worthy of pass-

ing reference. There undoubtedly still survives among the lowest classes in Australian cities a flavour of the old bitter convict spirit which originally sought expression in the formation of bandit gangs of predatory bushrangers. In the traditions of the various pushes the most desperate of these long-departed outlaws occupied positions of heroic eminence, and many individual larrikins claim them as ancestors, probably not without reason. With the destruction of the last of the Australian bushrangers the cause of their existence vanished, indeed before that time, for by 1840 the colonies had ceased to be penal settlements. A constantly instreaming free population, with its concomitant civilising influences, gradually swallowed up and humanised the more amenable and major portion of the old convict leaven. In 1836 two-fifths of the entire population of Australia—77,000—consisted of convicts. Fourteen years later the population had increased to 265,500 souls, only a small proportion of whom could have been convicts or of convict origin. In the meantime names were changed, the newcomers intermarried with the old, and disgraceful records of the past were mercifully consigned to oblivion. But in the cities and heart-centres there remained, in spite of all things moving to the contrary, a truculent and intractable element,—men and women who, either naturally vicious or turned to evil courses by in-

justice or ill-usage, associated together from sympathy and similarity of disposition. These creatures established themselves in separate communities, and being for the most part idle and criminally inclined, selected for their abodes places whose topographical conditions suited their requirements, chief of which were a vantage-ground from which they might issue forth to beg or steal, and a readily accessible refuge from pursuit.

With the growth of population and the expanse of civilisation these pestilential areas have been gradually enclosed by warehouses, wharves, suburbs, and in occasional instances by wealthy and thriving thoroughfares. But the communities themselves were as little as possible affected by the march of outer progress, and until recently constituted, in their dwellings, habits, and modes of life, landmarks of the ancient convict system. Their existing representatives are doubtless a better, more industrious, and enlightened class. Education in Australia is compulsory, therefore all can read and write; but they retain a generous measure of ancestral viciousness, and their ranks supply to the jails a large proportion of felons.

Among these settlements pushes originated and still thrive; but exactly when or for what reason the first push was instituted is only a matter of conjecture with the larrikins themselves.

The “Rocks” Push, which is one of the oldest and most

powerful of these societies, possesses a tradition that it was founded about the year 1841 by a freed man, a stone-mason named Slick, who appears to have been its first leader or king, but who was evidently an astute rather than an actively evil rascal; for a careful examination of records has revealed no accounts of his misdoings. His memory is, however, cherished by the “Rocks” with extreme veneration, and the word “slick” is used by them to express appreciation of an act of extraordinary cleverness or cunning.

The objective ambitions of all push societies are practically identical. Primarily they seek amusement. In all likelihood their original establishment sprang from an imperious desire on the part of the youthful members of the old crime-infested communities to invent an occupation of recreation for their hours of leisure. Grossly ignorant, brutal, and naturally malevolent, these young hobbledehoys were objects of aversion to the sons of the respectable classes. Unable to individually resent a well-merited contumely, and pressed back upon their own ranks for companionship, the primeval larrikins collected in crowds at street corners, at first content to revenge themselves upon their social superiors, who had despised them, by abuse and occasional assaults. By insensible degrees their operations expanded, and, realising their strength, they tyrannised over all thoroughfares in the neighbourhood of their retreats. Their next step

was to form themselves into clubs, in imitation of the methods of their execrated enemies, and these clubs, in a spirit of mockery, were called after the most fashionable names. Later, wearying of such apéry, they renamed the clubs "pushes," and although these pushes had originally no dangerously immoral design in their construction, such became gradually ingrafted upon their constitutions, as they increased in power and insolence, and were led into the perpetration of actual crimes, from which period they developed into secret societies.

At the present day, being constrained by constant police supervision, their amusements are almost innocuous. Each push possesses one club-house or more, usually a large barn-like structure, wherein they hold their meetings, and wherein dancing is often carried on from dusk to dawn. Larrikins love dancing above all other human pleasures, and indulge the passion whenever they find opportunity. It is no uncommon thing, indeed, to see twenty young men lolling around the walls of their club-house watching one of their number waltz with a "donah" who has chanced to pass, and whose services have been requisitioned for the occasion. The girl will invariably dance without intermission, except for the purpose of changing her partner, to the music of a concertina, until she is weary, whereupon the men who have not been obliged to execute *pas seuls* or waltz together, unwilling to remain entirely "out in the cold."

Another favourite pastime is the push picnic. Accompanied by their "donahs," they proceed on Sundays and other public holidays to some choice resort by water or rail, and there arrived, light monster fires, boil their "billies," feast themselves to their hearts' content, and afterwards dance upon sward or sand wherever they may be. Woe, however, to the unwise curious who may venture to spy upon such gatherings! The pushes resent the slightest approach at interference, and, construing the term liberally, penalise all attempts to pass across their sphere of operations with showers of "gibbers"—i.e., sticks and stones. Should the wayfarer exhibit a retaliatory disposition, he is chased; if caught, belaboured, and sometimes, though of late years very rarely, kicked to death.

The second definite objective motive of most pushes is to secure what immunity they can from the consequences of their crimes. Should a member of a push accused of felony be arrested, a contribution is at once levied upon the society, unless sufficient money is in hand to meet the exigencies of the case. The most eminent criminal barrister obtainable is engaged for the defence, and the arresting policeman and presiding magistrate are anonymously warned to beware. If satisfactory—that is, overwhelming—evidence is produced of the prisoner's guilt, the push seldom grumble at a commitment; they, however, insist upon dismissal of the charge if decently possible, and that

their *protégé* should be given the benefit of every doubt. Should a magistrate order a member of any push to be flogged, no matter how dastardly the offence of which he has been convicted, the push decrees vengeance. That magistrate thereafter carries his life in his hands, and knows it. The policeman who secured the conviction, if wise, immediately applies for removal to another district, otherwise sooner or later he will be caught, and in some lonely spot, far removed from aid, brutally "dealt with" by the assembled push.

No magistrate has ever yet fallen a victim to push vengeance, although attempts have been made upon their lives, notably in the case of the late Justice Sir William Windeyer (whose private house was once attacked by a push), whose long and fearless administration of justice earned for himself the inextinguishable hatred of all Sydney pushes.

The reverse, however, obtains with the constabulary, whose duties constantly lead them into occasions of danger. Some policemen have been murdered, while so many more at various times have been wounded and severely injured that the New South Wales Legislature found it necessary to constitute "assault with intent" a capital felony. Within the last five years several larrikins, convicted of this statutory crime, have been condemned to execution. It is true that their sentences have been, in deference to popular sentiment, usually commuted to imprison-

ment for life; but two at least, the notorious *Montgomery* and *Williams*, deservedly suffered death.

The third object of push ambition is political and of quite recent growth, for only during the last decade have they commenced to recognise the full extent of their numerical civil power exercised unitedly. At all elections within that period, however, they have made themselves felt, and their numbers have since then so steadily swelled that without doubt they will one day, unless suppressed or disbanded in the meantime, be in a position to send their own representatives to Parliament, instead of, as now, depending upon the promises of foreign adventitious candidates. Their electioneering methods are very simple, although absolute mysteries to the police. When candidates are announced, their various qualifications are privately discussed during an appointed period. The king then calls meetings of the push throughout the extent of his district, and a ballot is taken, the result of which determines the votes of the entire society, which is thereupon required to unanimously accept and enforce the decision so expressed by its majority.

In the Liver Push so late as last October were enrolled the names of more than 400 youths, varying in age from seventeen to twenty-nine, at least 200 of whom possessed elector's rights. When it is considered that each electoral

district in Australia is small, containing only a very few thousand electors, and, moreover, that all elections are invariably narrowly contested, it will be perceived what a tremendous factor a solid caucus block of 200 votes must prove in determining results, without taking into account the other and less lawful devices already described, which are pursued by the pushes in securing the return of a man of their choice.

Push organisation is chiefly remarkable for its masterly simplicity. Its inventors seem to have realised that it must be easy to conceal that which is scarcely worth the trouble of revealing; and no doubt its very simplicity is largely responsible for the success it has achieved and the mystery wherein it is enshrouded.

All male youths above the age of seventeen who permanently reside in a push district are eligible for membership. Should they wish to join they send to the king a written application and a fee of 10s., which fee is one of the king's perquisites of office. On receiving the application the king calls together his five councillors, whom he instructs to make inquiries and report. A meeting of the push is then convened, and the applicant is accepted or rejected on a show of hands. If accepted, he serves as a provisional initiate for a period of six months, when upon subscribing his name to the book of crimes, the "Push Book," as it is called, he becomes a full-fledged member,

and is made acquainted with the push's code of laws. No oath is administered, and there is no ceremony or form of introduction whatsoever, although the whole police force of Australia think otherwise, and resolutely refuse to entertain another opinion. The fact is, that oaths and ceremonies are entirely unnecessary, as will be admitted when the penal laws of the pushes are reviewed.

Push government is in all cases monarchical. Each push is ruled by an elected king, who retains office for life or good conduct, and whose power within certain well-defined limits is absolute.

The position of king is by no means a sinecure. He is expected to settle all disputes, to control and preside over all public gatherings, to arrange for the execution of push vengeance, and to conduct political elections within his district. He is treasurer of his society and administrator of its funds, which are deposited in some bank to his sole credit. All members pay him the weekly sum of 6d., the accumulations of which contributions he principally devotes toward the maintenance of the families of those of his subjects who fall ill, lose their employment, or undergo terms of imprisonment. The king of one Sydney Push held in trust for his society last October the sum of £700 in the Bank of New South Wales, and this after paying away during the year some hundreds of pounds to lawyers and others for the defence of those of his subjects who had been variously

accused of robbery, assault, vagabondage, arson, &c. The king is also judge of all push offences and awarder of penalties. He is, nevertheless, just as subject to push laws as the latest recruit of the order, and if it could be proven that he had transgressed the code in any particular, he would be deposed and a new king appointed, whose first duty would be to punish the dethroned monarch.

The kings are, however, very jealous of their dignities, and regulate their conduct with the utmost care. They are usually men of some property or position — publicans, pawnbrokers, or small storekeepers, never labourers or artisans, for their duties are engrossing and onerous, and require several hours daily of close attention. They are assisted by five councillors, whom they select from the push. These positions are anxiously coveted, for small stipends are attached to them, and the councillors enjoy a certain distinction from being associated with royalty. The king is addressed as "sir," and spoken of as "him." The respect paid to him both in public and private is very real and sincere, for his power, however seldom exercised, is enormous. The king never takes part in any dangerously unlawful proceeding except surreptitiously; his life is guarded as perfectly as circumstances allow, and is as apparently reputable as that of the most conventional citizen; for the push, keenly alive to the value of money, realises the importance of keeping its

treasurer's liberty and bank account inviolate.

The first and most stringent principle of push law enforces obedience to constituted authority. "What the king says goes" is their own phrase, and contravention of the maxim is punishable in the first instance with the "sock," in the second with death. The sock is not an entirely original species of torture, but it is popular with all larrikims, who dearly love an opportunity of witnessing its infliction. The offender is stripped, gagged, and strapped face downwards along an ordinary wooden bench, whereupon the executioners beat him in turn with a stocking filled with wet sand until his flesh is completely raw. He is then salted, and kept in durance until recovery. On such occasions proceedings are conducted with the gravest decorum: no one is permitted to speak, and unnecessary violence is sternly prohibited. No sympathy is manifested for the victim, and such a circumstance as a protest against the barbarity of the punishment is absolutely unknown. The death-penalty is rarely exacted except against outsiders who have incurred the push vengeance; but in either case the method employed is the same. The king chooses for executioners a score of his subjects, of whom at least seven are the latest recruits of the order. The victim, who is often stalked for months before he can be found in or decoyed to a favourable spot, is, when

caught, surrounded, stunned, and thrown to the ground. No lethal weapon is employed, but each of the push silently kicks, and continues to kick, the body of the prostrate wretch until life is extinct. The whole twenty are thus equally rendered guilty of murder, and probably no member of any push has been enrolled for a longer period than two years without being thus stamped with the hall-mark of pushdom, which is the brand of Cain.

This fact, more than all other circumstances combined, explains their marvellous cohesion, their invincible integrity and fidelity to each other, and their loyalty to and dependence upon their kings, who alone from the moment of their installation in office are immune from participation in these nefarious practices. The ingenuity of the conception compares favourably with the methods of other secret societies the world over (whether Fenians, Russian Nihilists, or the Mafia), who are accustomed to intrust the execution of their criminal decrees to the hands of some chosen person, thus rendering themselves frequently liable to defeat and betrayal. In the private annals of the Rocks' Push there is not recorded a single instance of social treachery, although individual members have been often tempted by Government offers of pardon and reward. All fear to speak, because all are equally guilty, and each man knows that if he played

the traitor, police protection would prove inadequate to save him from the anger of his outraged fellows.

Only a small proportion of push murders is discovered by the police, for of late years the pushes have conducted these affairs with skill and deliberation, and they now always carefully dispose of the bodies of their victims, unless disturbed by some unforeseen mishap. It is no uncommon circumstance to observe in the Australian daily journals large headlines announcing the mysterious disappearance of some male individual. The pushes do not war on women. (Women never disappear.) Such evanishments are rarely accounted for. Occasionally a push execution is interrupted and so prevented, for a push, if disturbed at their horrid work by even a single person, immediately disperse in order to avoid recognition. The man so narrowly saved from death is rarely able to remember or identify his assailants, perhaps because deprived of consciousness before he had an opportunity to observe them; the pushes, moreover, only attack on starless nights. On the revelation of a crime of this nature a public outcry is raised, press and people uniting to vilify particularly one phase of the outrage, the *cowardice* displayed by the larrikins in mobbing their victim. The secret reason of this "cowardice" is now for the first time made manifest, and it must be conceded that the term is

scarcely appropriate, however just it may appear when regarded from insufficient premises. Larrikins, as a rule, are not (at anyrate the present generation) cowards, considered individually; but when upon execution duty they look upon themselves as soldiers under orders, and obey without dispute commands which frequently traverse their private inclinations.

The remainder of the push laws are prohibitive rather than directory. Drunkenness is absolutely forbidden, and the son of a dipsomaniac father is seldom admitted to push membership. All instances of intoxication are visited with fines; if repeated, the sock; and finally, should these devices fail of cure, the drunkard will perish in a brawl, or disappear. Unchastity is sternly discountenanced. Push larrikins are required to lead continent lives, —not necessarily to be either celibates or to marry, but, once provided with mates, to remain faithful to the partners of their choice, and to maintain them to the best of their ability. An established case of connubial infidelity is punished with the sock; as a consequence adultery can scarcely be reckoned among their vices. The failure to pay a gambling debt (all larrikins are inveterate gamblers) earns for the defaulter the personal adornment of a clipped right ear, and no one bets with a man so marked. If one member robs or swindles another, he is required to make restitution within a stated period or endure

the sock. Failure to subscribe to the funds of the order is similarly penalised, unless the delinquent suffers under a legitimate disability, in which case he may himself claim financial assistance.

Few larrikins are professional criminals. The majority earn their livelihood honestly enough as butchers' assistants, engine-hands, abattoir employees, firemen, stokers, wharf-labourers, jockeys, iron-workers, dock-hands, and so on. Many of them are skilled artisans who command capital wages; but all are by nature criminally inclined: they regard life from a purely material standpoint, and, dishonest as unprincipled, miss few opportunities to steal or lie. They are remarkable, however, for possessing a singular love of animals, possibly because they are a step nearer the brute kingdom than most other human beings. The larrikin who owns a horse, dog, or cat bestows upon his pet the most superlative attention and affection, in which respect he resembles Chinamen, who are also wonderfully kind to animals. An Australian street proverb has in consequence arisen—"Flash as a Chinkey's horse; fat as a larrikin's dog."

Larrikins are usually undersized men, but broad-shouldered and compactly built. Their faces are neither ugly nor entirely unprepossessing, but invariably disfigured by an expression which is most adequately pictured by the words "impertinent" and "irreverent." Poor readers, they

nevertheless scan the daily papers for police reports and items of political intelligence, and when the chance offers eagerly devour literature of the sensational type, such as 'The Annals of Newgate,' 'The Adventures of Captain Peace,' or the 'Deadwood Dick' serials. Unconscious of religion, they are atheists from sheer ignorance. Their language is shockingly blasphemous and filthy, and their respect for women is so trifling that the presence of their "donahs" places no chivalrous restraint upon their tongues. A larrikin may beat his wife, although he may not be unfaithful to her. This enforced connubial fidelity no doubt originated from the fear of the founders of the push societies that jealousy might possibly lead to their undoing. Otherwise it is a source of real power, for the lower classes of Australian women, naturally enough, are prone to seek mates over whom they may exercise a certain control, and of whose allegiance they may always feel assured. In my personal experience of push life I have encountered two separate instances of a straight-living woman preferring to become the mistress of a push larrikin rather than the wife of another man. The women do not share the secrets of their lords, and are indeed regarded by the men as inferior beings in the scheme of creation to themselves.

Upon ordinary occasions the pushes wear no distinctive uniform, but on public holidays they variously ape the London

coster or the stage cowboy, and appear attired in pearly-covered coats and bell-mouthed trousers; or gorgeous with sombrero hats and bright bandana neckerchiefs.

There are at least six large push societies resident in Sydney, whose numerical strength ranges in membership from 400 to 100. These are called, in the order of their importance, the "Liver," "Rocks," "Botany," "Pymont," "Leichhardt," and "Balmain" pushes. In Melbourne there exist as many more, quite as powerful in point of numbers and criminal efficiency; while the cities—Brisbane, Adelaide, Hobart, Fremantle, and Perth—suffer similar burdens proportionately to their size and population. A low estimate would endow the whole of Australia with 6000 larrikins, but 10,000 would probably be nearer the truth.

I shall conclude this article with a short description of the common push method of providing for its safety in all circumstances, and a hint of a means whereby possibly the growing evil might be eradicated, and Australian society freed of a bugbear which has ridden it for almost half a century.

Each member of a push on entering his order signs his name in the Push Book, and is by that simple act unwittingly constituted a criminal, for he becomes an immediate accessory after the fact to all the outrages perpetrated by the push.

If a member desires to sever his connection with his push or to depart from the push district in order to reside elsewhere, he is allowed to do so only after signing a confession of having single-handed committed the last capital crime of which the push is jointly and severally guilty. This document—and there are many such—is handed to the king, who files it in the Push Book, which precious portfolio is naturally kept in a place of security. This book is the one really weak spot in the push system, for once lost and conveyed to the hands of the authorities, the whole push must stand before the bar of justice self-arraigned and self-condemned as *murderers* and *accessories*. No push, however, realises the danger that men-

aces, and in their blind ignorance actually believe that their safety depends upon the careful preservation of these ghastly memorials. At important gatherings the book is required to be produced, so that members may have an opportunity of reassuring themselves by perusing confessions which they fatuously imagine transfer and fasten their joint burdens upon the shoulders of absent individuals.

Achilles of old was vulnerable in his heel alone. If the Australian police are perfectly desirous of crushing the heroic growth of pushdom, they should emulate the subtle son of Priam, and direct their arrows at the flaw.

Every push cherishes its book.

AMBROSE PRATT.

A CORSAIR OF SAINT MALO.

DURING the late Peace Conference at The Hague the American proposal to exempt all private property from capture at sea in war-time, save in the case of an attempt to run a blockade, was very ill received—so ill, indeed, that it was ruled out. Nobody had a good word to say for it except the Americans themselves, and the French were notably hostile. At first sight this may seem somewhat surprising. It is natural that we should be reluctant to part with what has been one of the most effectual ways of making our naval power felt. It is not so obvious why States which possess smaller fleets should be even less willing than we are to exempt private property on the sea from confiscation in war. Since they cannot hope to compete with us on equal terms, it would seem to be their clear interest to endeavour to bring about the acceptance of a rule which would give a large measure of security to their maritime commerce. But, in truth, this view is so ill supported by the facts that it is not easy to account for the proposal of the United States except on the supposition that they wished to prove their own consistency by advocating once more the rule they tried to get established at the Conference of Paris in 1856. The exemption of private property from capture at sea, except by a blockading force, would work wholly for the benefit of Great Britain. In case of war she would be left

free to employ her whole navy in blockading the ports of her enemy, while her own commerce would be as safe as in peace. But the one means of injuring us which nations of less strength at sea possess is precisely the use of swift cruisers for the purpose of molesting our trade. It was inevitable, therefore, that they should refuse to accept a rule which would have struck their most effectual weapon out of their hands.

The opposition of the French might have been counted on as a certainty. No one who has paid the least attention to their writing on the policy it will be best for them to pursue at sea in the case of another war with England, can fail to know that they rely, apparently with increasing confidence, on their power to ruin our trade. The peaceful end of the Fashoda incident may be taken as a proof that France has no such trust in her capacity to do us a fatal damage as to make her ready to accept the risks of war. It may even be taken as establishing a strong presumption that she will not willingly fight us at all unless a singularly good opportunity appears to present itself. Yet one cannot be absolutely sure of a country in which M. Déroulède is of importance, and the temptation to seize some real or apparent chance may be too great; or, again, the restless minority which drags France into adventures may work her up into one of those fits of hysteria in which

she thinks herself insulted. Then we may be sure that commerce-destroying will be attempted. The French theory is capable of being briefly stated. It is based upon two axioms. The first is, that Great Britain cannot invade France with an army, and therefore cannot destroy her ports of war. The second is, that the British empire is "a clay-footed colossus." French critics do not dispute the overwhelming strength of our navy or the immense force of our position. On the contrary, they confess their inability to keep the sea with fleets. But while fully recognising their comparative weakness, they argue that they have a far greater power of offence against us than we are prepared to allow. Great Britain, say they, depends for the greater part of her food on sea-borne commerce, while it is upon her trade that she wholly depends for the means of buying this food. If, then, her merchant shipping can be seriously injured, she will be so wounded that she must seek peace. Absolute destruction is not necessary. Disturbance, a great increase in the price of food, loss, and confusion will be enough. If these evils can be brought on the British empire it will be compelled to buy peace, even though its fleets may ride outside of Brest and Toulon in such strength that the French squadrons cannot venture to give them battle. And they contend that this war on our trade can be carried on, however powerful our fleets may be, by swift vessels, whose mission will be not to fight but to destroy. They are also much

in the habit of claiming for themselves a peculiar capacity for this corsair war. They quote Jean Bart, though he was no Frenchman but a Fleming, Forbin, and Duguay-Trouin, as examples of the successful corsair, and are fond of deducing from the achievements of these men the moral that if only France applies herself boldly to the use of their methods, she can bring down the "clay-footed colossus." Now and then we may come across some who are of the same opinion among ourselves. Perhaps there is no better way of testing the foundation of this confidence of theirs, and stilling our own fears, than by looking at one of these corsairs and seeing what he actually did succeed in doing.

No more typical personage could be taken for this purpose than Duguay-Trouin. He lived and fought through all the wars of King William and Queen Anne, when the French corsair or commerce-destroying warfare was at its very best. He achieved considerable success, and is attractive for two other reasons. In his old age he wrote a volume of *Memoirs*, less amusing and varied than those of his contemporary, the Count de Forbin, who also was a dashing corsair, but much more honest; and he was the hero, the representative man, of the famous old privateering Breton town of Saint Malo.

Saint Malo was founded by the Church, and it lived by the sea. It dates its existence from the year 1152, when Bishop Jean de la Grille removed his

throne from Aleth to the little rocky island at the eastern side of the entry to the river Rance. Malo is the vernacular form of the name of Maclovius, the saint to whom the island and its church were dedicated. In after-times one of the townsmen said with perfect truth that Saint Malo, having neither corn, wine, wool, nor manufactures, could only exist by the water. Fishery, coast-trade, and piracy were the occupations of the townsmen. Throughout the Middle Ages their vessels were active in the never-ending wars with the English. The hardy sea-life made them independent, and they thrived by trade. Nor did they forget their old connection with the Church. During the war of the League, and after the murder of Henri III., Saint Malo refused to recognise a Huguenot king. It also refused to receive a garrison from the chiefs of the Leaguers, and maintained a position of neutrality, which was in fact one of republican independence, till the conversion of Henri IV. gave it a king both Catholic and legitimate. The strength of its position was very great. Its little island was not then joined to the mainland by a causeway, and it could defy an army. On the sea side it was protected by a barrier of dangerous reefs, and the bar of the Rance, which must be crossed to reach the anchorage. Great ships could be piloted in at high tide, as was shown when D'Amfreville took refuge there after the battle of Barfleur in 1692; but it was properly a harbour for small vessels. With the growth of the size of merchant-ships Saint

Malo has necessarily sunk into a place of small importance. But until well into the eighteenth century it was a thriving town. The population was calculated at 13,000 at the end of the seventeenth, when Duguay-Trouin was born. None of our outports at that time, with the exception of Bristol, was larger. The Malouins were hardy seamen who had for their chiefs a class of merchants and skippers (the two functions were then combined everywhere) who were adventurous, skilful in trade during peace, active corsairs in war, and very tenacious of their privileges. Wealth, and the right to lead, were hereditary in these families; but it was their good fortune, and even seems to have been their pride, till the times of Louis XIV., that they were not noble. Under the curious old French distinction between *nobles* and *nobles hommes* they fell into the second class. That is to say, they were rich, educated, had their gable on the street, their estates on the mainland, and their country houses. But they had not *noblesse*, had no right to a coat-of-arms, and therefore no law nor social prejudice debarred them from the pursuit of trade. They formed a strong, prosperous, self-reliant class, which could supply captains of industry in peace, and skippers of corsairs in war.

It must be kept in mind that these corsairs formed a recognised part of the regular navy of the French kings. They held a relatively higher place than the privateers to whom "letters of marque and reprisal" were

issued on the outbreak of war among us. Their rights, obligations, and position were regulated at length by the elaborate *ordonnances* framed by Colbert and his successors for the French navy. When war broke out, and trade became impossible, or only dangerous, the *armateurs*, or shipowners of Saint Malo (and of other ports, too, but our business here is with the Breton town), were expected, and encouraged, to fit out ships for the service of the king. They were also ready enough to turn to privateering as a means of making up what they lost in trade. The captain of a corsair had a regular commission giving him the right of "high and low justice" over his crew. The owner deposited 15,000 livres or francs with the Admiralty as a guarantee that he would observe the law. Before 1695 the *armateurs* of Saint Malo had to deal with the Admiralty of Brittany, but after that date with the Admiralty of France. Ten per cent of all prizes had to be paid to the admiral, and five per cent was levied for the Church. Of what remained after these deductions had been made, two-thirds belonged to the owner of the ship, or, as we said in the Elizabethan times, to the "adventurer," to the capitalist who ventured his money, and who frequently commanded his own ship. The remaining third was divided among the officers and crew. But a distinction was made between them. While the captain and his officers were entitled to a fixed reward, twelve, eight, or four shares, according to rank, the sailors were to be re-

warded according to their merit, which practically left them at the mercy of their superiors. On the other hand, they were entitled to regular pay, which was fixed at a maximum of fifteen crowns for the "course" or cruise of four months. No sailor could ship till he was duly certified by the King's Lieutenant as exempt from service in the navy. These sailors were, as may well be supposed, a somewhat unruly body. All the authority of the captain, great as it was, was not too much to keep them in order. Innumerable regulations had to be made to prevent them from selling their wages, and share of prizes, beforehand to tavern-keepers, and spending the proceeds in a wild debauch before sailing. They had an incorrigible trick of pillaging the prizes before bringing them in. On the whole, one gathers that the degree of order a captain would succeed in keeping depended far less on his legal authority than on his personal influence, and his readiness to strike. Finally, it is to be noted that the king frequently hired his own ships to the *armateurs*. In that case, the expense of fitting them for sea fell on the adventurer, the king taking a fifth of the prize-money as the hire of his ship. When the burden of the war against the League of Augsburg began to weigh heavily on Louis XIV., he hired his ships out to the capitalists of his ports in increasing numbers, and allowed his sailors to serve in the corsairs. After 1693 his treasury began to sink under the load, and he could no longer keep his navy on foot. The corsairs, in

fact, were his alternative to the great fleets which had sailed under D'Estrées, Duquesne, Châteaurenault, and Tourville. When the closeness of the connection between the corsairs and the royal navy is remembered, we see how it could happen that in so aristocratic a country as France a corsair captain could pass into the king's service, as Jean Bart and Duguay-Trouin both did, or a naval officer of the high birth of the Count de Forbin could command corsairs. With us no such interchange was possible. No regular naval officer was ever seconded to command a privateer, nor would the Admiralty have endured to see the bravest of privateer captains put on the regular corps.

Among the families of Saint Malo which lived by trade and by privateering, the Trouins held a high place. Luc Trouin—called *Sieur de la Barbinais*, from a small estate he owned on the mainland—had served as a corsair in the war against Spain and Holland, which began in 1672. The Trouins had held the consulate at Malaga, then a very important post, for nearly two centuries, and were people of local importance. René, the future admiral, was the fourth child and third son of this Luc and of Marguerite Boscher,—who also belonged to a family of the same class,—and was born on the 10th of June 1673. The eldest of the children, named Luc after his father, was consul at Malaga, and was destined to succeed to the chief place in the firm. In such a household it would be a matter of course that one

of the sons would be set aside to “wag his pow in a pulpit.” René was chosen, merely because he was a younger son, and was sent to school first at Rennes, and afterwards with the Jesuits at Caen. He was known as Duguay-Trouin, after a small farm belonging to his father, and to distinguish him from his elder brother, who would be “designate of la Barbinais.” The local custom in the use of these territorial designations was somewhat confusing. In the patent of nobility granted to René in after-years, he is called Trouin du Gué; but use and wont, which are sovereign in these matters, have decided that the proper form is Duguay-Trouin. The estate name is in fact put before the family name; and not in his case only, for his father and brother are as often called *de la Barbinais Trouin* as *Trouin de la Barbinais*. The good Abbé Poulain, who has investigated the history of the corsair city, shakes his head over this rough-and-ready method of recruiting the Church without regard to vocation, which commended itself to the time and to the family of Trouins. But there was no fear that René would bring scandal on the priesthood. He was too clearly destined for another line of life. At Caen, though he was tonsured as one marked out for orders, he made himself notorious for incessant brawling and duelling. In his *Memoirs* he speaks with a becoming air of reprobation of disorders which he clearly did not much repent in his heart. According to his own account, he made himself

such a nuisance that a general league was formed for his suppression. He was saved by the intervention of a friend, who was, however, admirably calculated to lead him ultimately to the gallows. "This generous stranger," it seems, "was an honourable sharper. I call him honourable"—so the corsair goes on to explain what certainly needed explanation—"because he gambled, and, so long as he had any, lost his money with infinite nobleness; but so soon as he was short of funds, he put his skill in practice to recall fortune: for the rest a thoroughly brave fellow, with a fine figure and engaging manners. He shared his pleasures with me, and I became the confidant and the inseparable companion of his adventures." The generous stranger bears a striking resemblance to a personage in French poetry older than Duguay-Trouin's time, who smelt of the halter for a league all round, but was for the rest the finest fellow in the world. Under the guidance of this preserver, who taught him card-sharpping among other arts, the young René launched on a course of picaresque adventure, which included at least one attempt at abduction and a host of brawls. It is right to add that he emphatically asserts that he never did himself cheat at cards. Still, he was in a fair way to come to little good when he was rescued by his elder brother. The father was now dead, and the brother head of the house. Luc Trouin persuaded the mother to renounce her scheme of making a priest of René, and to consent to send

the lad to sea. The war of the League of Augsburg and with England, which began in 1689, supplied a fine opportunity for putting him where his taste for adventure would have a legitimate opening.

The Trouins, like our own family of Hawkins, the ship-owners of Plymouth in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, who maintained or owned shares in a little fleet of privateers, had many vessels at sea. René began his apprenticeship in one of them, *La Trinité*, in 1689. He made his first acquaintance with sea-fighting, and candidly confesses in his *Memoirs* that he did not at once become hardened to the work. The privateers were commonly full of men, but did not carry a heavy battery. They trusted to their speed, which would be sacrificed by a great weight of guns, and it was not their interest to damage a prize. Therefore they aimed at carrying any vessel they attacked by boarding. During the second cruise of *La Trinité* she fell in with a Dutch privateer from Flushing. As a mere matter of business, there was no temptation to attack an armed opponent; but the French Government, in order to encourage the privateers to perform military work, gave a reward of 500 livres for every cannon captured from the enemy. So, though the *Trinité* would no doubt have preferred to meet a merchant-ship, she did not run from the privateer. The two vessels met, and Duguay-Trouin thus describes his first experience of war. We met, he says, and

"we boarded him broadside to broadside. I was not one of the last to present myself for the purpose of leaping on his deck. Our boatswain, by whose side I stood, wished to leap first. Unhappily he fell between the two vessels, which, as they were closing at that very moment, crushed his limbs before my eyes, and scattered part of his brain over my dress. This sight stopped me, all the more because I reflected that, not having a seaman's foot as he had, it was morally impossible for me to escape the same horrible death. Meanwhile the privateer caught fire in the poop, and she was carried sword in hand, after beating back our boarders three times running. It was thought that for a beginner I had shown reasonable firmness."

It is so rare to find any fighting man, and especially any Frenchman, who will confess to having felt fear, that our confidence in the honesty of Duguay-Trouin is considerably increased by this example of candour. His first cruises in the *Trinité* made him also acquainted with shipwreck, and he rapidly hardened to the life. From his first ship he passed to the *Grénadan*, another Trouin privateer. Though still without rank, his relationship to the owners gave him importance with the captain, and he claims to have been the means of bringing about the capture of two large vessels which had been taken for men-of-war, but were in fact only armed merchant-ships. On this occasion Duguay-Trouin fell overboard just before the boarding himself, but escaped with a ducking. The promise he had shown was so good that in 1691 his family gave him a ship. She was a bad sailer, and carried only fourteen guns; but while in command of her he landed on

the coast of Ireland, and burnt a house belonging to the Earl of Cork near Limerick. From this little tub he passed to the *Coëtquen* of eighteen guns. In 1692, in company with another Saint Malo corsair of the same size, he fell in with a convoy of English merchant-ships under the protection of two vessels of sixteen guns. Duguay-Trouin claims to have taken both of the protecting vessels with the *Coëtquen*, while his colleague picked up the traders. The incident does not redound to our glory; but it is very doubtful whether the two warships taken belonged to the navy. Our convoy work was very ill done by the Admiralty in those years, and the merchants constantly complained that they were compelled to hire privateers, even Dutchmen, for their protection. Be that as it may, this feat shows exactly how a convoy could be successfully attacked. If Duguay-Trouin and his consort had combined to fall on the two protecting vessels of sixteen guns, the traders might have had time to escape. If the armed English ships had been strong enough to cripple him, they might then have turned against his consort. In order to make an attack on a convoy a real success, it was necessary that the assailant should be in sufficient strength to fight the protecting ships, and to make prize of the merchant-vessels at one and the same time.

This fact explains a great change which came over the methods of the corsairs during the last three years of the war. We need not follow the per-

sonal adventures of Duguay-Trouin in 1693 and 1694 minutely. In both years he commanded vessels hired from the king. In the second of them he was taken prisoner by a squadron of English vessels, after a fight which he represents as almost more than human, and which no doubt was gallant, and was carried to Plymouth. He confesses that he was handsomely treated; but as he had, as he also confesses, fired on one of our men-of-war a little before this time while he had the English flag displayed, he was in some danger of rough usage. By the help of a young woman at Plymouth who took an interest in him, he contrived to escape in the disguise of a Swedish sailor, and was soon at sea again. From this time forward, however, we hear no more of solitary cruises. Duguay-Trouin sails always with other men, and in squadrons which have a tendency to grow steadily larger. The ship-owners were, in fact, beginning to discover a truth which the modern school of advocates of commerce-destroying has forgotten, but which is enforced by the whole history of war at sea—namely, that cruising with single-handed privateers is not a paying business when it is tried against a naval Power which can supply armed protection for its convoys. Now and then a big prize may be taken, and as the men who follow this kind of life have always a strong dash of the gambling spirit, the luck of one encourages fifty. But the capitalist who fits out the ships,

and who judges by his books, soon finds that he is following a losing trade. Sooner or later the single cruiser falls a prey to superior force. Often she cruises for months and sees nothing, or only convoys so strongly protected that she dares not attack. Thus in the long-run, and in spite of occasional successes, privateering was never really profitable. At the best it was a poor alternative for the gains of commerce. When Elizabeth's Government was appealing to the outports to help towards the formation of the fleet which was to fight the Armada, it was met by complaint of want of means, and by the excuse that the plunder gained from the Spaniards in corsair voyages had not made good the loss of the Spanish trade. Centuries later the American shipowners made the same complaint in the war of 1812, though their privateers had been very successful. They ended by appealing to the Government for a subvention. Saint Malo itself was all but ruined before the war of the Spanish Succession was ended.

Meanwhile there were great profits to be made by the lucky ones for a time, and Duguay-Trouin was very fortunate between 1694 and 1697, when, as he loyally puts it, "his Majesty thought fit to give peace to Europe." His Majesty King Louis XIV. had, in fact, excellent reasons for buying peace, even at a great price, for France was all but exhausted, and it was absolutely necessary to gather strength again before the struggle which everybody

foresaw to be inevitable for the inheritance of King Charles II. of Spain. So the peace of Ryswick gave Europe four years of breathing-time, and then war began again in 1702. During this quiet interval Duguay-Trouin spent his prize-money, and devoted his leisure to those bodily exercises of which he was fond, and in which he excelled. He had received a commission in the Royal Navy, and was probably already longing for the patent of nobility he received later on.

When his Majesty thought fit to rouse this country to fury by acknowledging the son of James II. as King of Great Britain and Ireland, and the war blazed up once more, the Saint Malo privateers had another opportunity to be busy. But already the conditions had become worse for them. Between 1689 and 1697 the British navy had suffered from all the consequences of the maladministration of King Charles's reign. It was far, indeed, from being free from corruption under Queen Anne—or for generations after. Yet it was better than it had been, and in one respect much improved. The measures taken to protect commerce during the war of the Spanish Succession were far better than they had been during the reign of King William. Thus the single-handed privateer was at a greater disadvantage than ever. She could only hope to pick up stragglers from the convoys. Some merchant captains were indeed so rash that whenever they were approaching home

in company with a number of others, and under the protection of men-of-war, they would try to push ahead during the night, in the hope of reaching the market while it was empty. The natural result was that they not seldom ran into the very mouths of the privateers cruising in the stream of the Channel. But these were what Dugald Dalgetty called "cad-uacs." They might be sufficient reward for light privateers equipped cheaply, which could be satisfied by picking up an occasional West Indiaman, or Turkey merchant from Scanderoon. They were not enough for the costly vessels of the Trouins, or to meet the expense of maintaining ships hired from the king. Both classes included what were then accounted as ships "fit to be in a line of battle," and of from fifty to seventy guns. If they were to pay for their keep they must go in such numbers that they could venture to attack serious convoys with a good prospect of being able to beat the protecting ships, and capture the merchant-craft at the same time. Thus during the war of the Spanish Succession we find Duguay-Trouin and his rival Forbin cruising with four, six, or eight ships, ranging from sloops of ten and twelve guns to line-of-battle ships of seventy. In 1707 they combined to attack an English convoy off the Lizard, and they then formed a squadron of twelve vessels. Yet even with this increase of force the cruises were frequently barren. The fortune of Duguay-Trouin in 1703 is an example.

In that year he sailed with a squadron of five vessels, three belonging to the king and two corsairs of Saint Malo. The object was to intercept the Dutch East Indiamen on their way home round the north of the British Isles. He reached the Orkneys only to find a Dutch squadron of fifteen sail detached to protect the vessels he was designed to capture. The odds were too long, and the corsair gave up all hope of the rich prize, and turned to Spitzbergen to molest the Dutch whalers. He had some success, but the cruise was stormy and trying. At the end of it he returned to Brest with thirteen poor prizes which cannot have paid the expenses of the armament.

This disappointment only provoked the Trouin family to increase the stake. They built two vessels of fifty-four guns and a corvette of eight, with which René cruised in search of prizes in 1704. That year was, however, everywhere disastrous to France. The Allied fleet under Rooke took Gibraltar in July. On the 13th August the attempt of the Count of Toulouse to recapture it ended in the drawn battle of Malaga. On that very day Marlborough and Eugene gave King Louis the terrible blow of Blenheim. The corsairs were able to do nothing effectual as a set-off. A few prizes fell into their hands, but no great convoy was taken. What was even worse was, that the old confident spirit began to fail. In an action with some English ships near the Lizard, Duguay-Trouin was deserted by one of

his colleagues, and so deeply disgusted at being unable to bring him to punishment that he seriously thought of throwing up his commission. In 1705 and 1706 it is the same story. The Saint Malo corsair was daring and indefatigable. In the first of these two years he escaped from an English squadron by vigilant watching and smart seamanship. But the glory had departed when the best success of the "commerce destroyer" was that he escaped. And the fleets of England and Holland were now so numerous, so well posted, and so well kept to their work by the outcries of the merchants, that there was little left for the boldest corsair to do but to run away.

Yet in 1707 Duguay-Trouin, in company with Forbin, achieved what was perhaps the most brilliant single feat of the corsair war. The circumstances in which it took place are significant. A large convoy was being prepared in England, consisting in good part of military stores for the Allied armies in the Peninsula. The French Government was eager to break it up, but knew that it would be well protected. As a matter of fact, the squadron sent to see it safe to Lisbon consisted of five vessels, the Devonshire and Cumberland of eighty guns, the Royal Oak of seventy-four, the Chester and the Ruby of fifty. An ordinary corsair squadron would have been helpless against such a force as this. Forbin and Duguay-Trouin were ordered to combine. Together they made a squadron of twelve vessels,

which fell upon the convoy off the Lizard on the 10th October 1707. The English captains fought most bravely, but no more can be said in their favour. Though our squadron was outnumbered it contained three vessels far superior in strength to any among the French, who, moreover, were much scattered; when the action was begun by Duguay-Trouin, who rushed straight at us. Yet Captain Richard Edwards, who commanded, did not attempt to do more than present a defensive barrier between the merchantships and the oncoming French, who were thus able to concentrate as they pleased, and crush him in detail. As a captain he did his duty manfully, fighting his ship, the *Cumberland*, till she was dismantled, and unable to resist further. The *Chester* and the *Ruby* were also taken. The *Devonshire* fought till evening, when she blew up with the loss of all her crew except three, and of three hundred soldiers she was carrying to Spain.

It was a fine piece of fighting, fairly comparable to Sir Edward Hawke's victory over M. de l'Etenduère in the War of the Austrian Succession, but as an operation of commerce-deströying was not an unqualified success. While the fighting was going on, the convoy escaped, and great part of it reached Lisbon safely. The most famous of Duguay-Trouin's victories, the capture of Rio Janeiro from the Portuguese, lay ahead of him, but this was a regular combined expedition, and hardly corsair work at all. As an assailant of our commerce his

successful career was ended. In 1708 he put to sea with a large squadron of vessels belonging to, or hired by, his family. No prizes were taken, and the Trouins were almost ruined by the expense. They gained a patent of nobility for their services, but they began the war rich, and at its end they were poor.

When we sum up the results of the corsair war, conducted as it was in the most favourable circumstances and by the most brilliant men, they may fairly be said to come to this—that some considerable temporary injury was done to English and Dutch commerce, but that no good was done to France. Saint Malo itself was all but beggared. King Louis, in his dire distress for money, showed that he knew the meaning of every form of exaction by which the lords of the French could wring the withers of their subjects. The Malouins found that their success in taking prizes only marked them out for the claws of the tax-collector. But this very distress of the royal treasury serves to show that there is no comparison between the loss inflicted by a fleet which rules unchecked by other fleets at sea, and the best privateering. The four thousand merchant-vessels which are said to have been lost by us between 1689 and 1697 formed but a part of our shipping. Meanwhile the French oversea trade was ruined from the day that the Allied fleets gained the upper hand. To inflict partial injury on your opponent is no compensation when you lose all yourself.

After 1702 our loss was far smaller, for our convoys were better protected, and the growing exhaustion of France left the shipowners ever less and less able to fit out privateers. In spite of the really brilliant feats of Duguay-Trouin and his brother corsairs, which we ought to be the last people in the world to belittle, France was nearly bled to death at the peace of Utrecht. Meanwhile the sea-borne commerce both of Great Britain and of Holland was healthy and was increasing. What they lost to the privateers, they more than made up by the disappearance of a rival. And so it has always been when one party to a naval war has gained a decisive superiority over its opponent's fleet.

What reason is there to suppose that the introduction of steam has altered the conditions which made the best privateering of so little use in ancient days? The French assume that steam has made some wonderful change, and then argue from their own assumption, as their manner is. But all the probabilities are against them. Suppose a modern Duguay-Trouin does slip out of Brest, not in a sailing-vessel, but in a steamer with a speed of twenty-four knots, and the largest coal capacity. According to our neighbours, he is to destroy our merchant-ships, but to avoid our men-of-war. They draw very striking pictures of the awful consequences to the clay-footed colossus. But all their imaginings have for foundation the wild assumption that our commerce will

go on in war-time as it did in peace. It most assuredly will not. Convoy will be used now as of old, and then what is the swift cruiser to do? The modern Duguay-Trouin will, like the old, find that the trader cannot be reached till the protecting man-of-war is overpowered. Moreover, if the process of overpowering the guard is a difficult one which takes time, the merchant-ships may be able to escape. The famous Malouin corsair sought for the solution of the problem by increasing the size of his ships and the number of his squadrons till he could fight heavy line-of-battle ships, and still leave himself a margin of force to seize on the traders. It was a most effectual method when it could be successfully employed, but it was something very different from commerce-destroying as described by the imaginative French naval critic. Duguay-Trouin did his work by hard fighting and not by running away. The modern school hopes to do his work without using his means. No doubt the necessity for using convoy will bring a considerable disturbance to our trade—but *à la guerre, comme à la guerre*. No sensible man supposes that we can have a naval war with so serious a Power as France and yet escape all inconvenience. That is a reason for not going to war on a light occasion, but it is not a reason for fearing that a kind of warfare which has always failed to produce great results in the past will prove more effectual in the future.

DOOM CASTLE: A ROMANCE.¹

BY NEIL MUNRO.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.—A WARNING.

PETULLO was from home. It was in such circumstances she found her bondage least intolerable. Now she was to find his absence more than a pleasant respite—it gave her an opportunity of warning Doom. She had scarce made up her mind how he should be informed of the jeopardies that menaced his guest, whose skaitless departure with Olivia was even, from her point of view, a thing wholly desirable, when the Baron appeared himself. It was not on the happiest of errands he came down on the first day of favouring weather; it was to surrender the last remnant of his right to the home of his ancestors. With the flourish of a quill he brought three centuries of notable history to a close.

"Here's a lesson in humility, Mr Campbell," said he to Petullo's clerk. "We builded with the sword, and fell upon the sheep-skin. Who would think that so foolish a bird as the grey goose would have Doom and its generations in its wing?"

He had about his shoulders a plaid that had once been of his tartan, but had undergone the degradation of the dye-pot for a foolish and tyrannical law: he threw it round him with a dignity that was half de-

fiance, and cast his last glance round the scene of his sorriest experiences—the dusty writing-desks, the confusion of old letters; the taped and dog-eared, fouled, and forgotten records of pithy causes; and, finally, at the rampart of deed-chests, one of which had the name "*Drimdarroch*" blazoned on it for remembrance if he had been in danger of forgetting.

"And is it yourself, Baron?" cried a woman's voice as he turned to go. "I am so sorry my husband is from home."

He turned again with his hat off for the lady who had an influence on his fate that he could never guess of.

"It is what is left of me, ma'am," said he. "And it is more than is like to be seen of me in these parts for many a day to come," but with no complaint in his expression.

"Ah," said she, "I know; I know! and I am so sorry. You cannot leave to-day of any day without a glass of wine for *deoch-an-doruis*."

"I thank you, ma'am," said Doom, "but my boat is at the quay, and Mungo waits for me."

"But, indeed, you must come in, Baron," she insisted. "There is something of the greatest importance I have to say to

¹ Copyright, 1900, by Doubleday, Page, & Co., in the United States of America.

you, and it need not detain you ten minutes."

He followed her upstairs to her parlour. It was still early in the day and there was something of the slattern in her dragging gown. As he walked behind her, the remembrance would intrude of that betraying letter, and he had the notion that perhaps she somehow knew he shared her shameful secret. Nor was the idea dispelled when she stopped and faced him in the privacy of her room with her eyes swollen and a trembling under-lip.

"And it has come to this of it, Baron?" said she.

"It has come to this," said Doom simply.

"I cannot tell you how vexed I am. But you know my husband——"

"I have the honour, ma'am," said he, bowing with an old-fashioned inclination.

"——You know my husband, a hard man, Baron, though I perhaps should be the last to say it, and I have no say in his business affairs."

"Which is doubtless proper enough," said Doom, and thought of an irony breeding forbade him to give utterance to.

"But I must tell you I think it is a scandal you should have to go from the place of your inheritance; and your sweet girl too! I hope and trust she is in good health and spirits?"

"My good girl is very well," said he, "and with some reason for cheerfulness in spite of our misfortunes. As for them, ma'am, I am old enough to have seen and known a suffi-

ency of ups and downs, of flux and change, to wonder at none of them. I am not going to say that what has come to me is the most joco of happenings for a person like myself that has more than ordinary of the sentimentalist in me, and is bound to be wrapped up in the country-side hereabouts. But the tail may go with the hide, as the saying runs. Doom, that's no more than a heartbreak of memories and an empty shell, may very well join Duntorvil and Drimdarroch and the Islands of Lochow, that have dribbled through the courts of what they call the law and left me scarcely enough to bury myself in another country than my own."

Mrs Petullo was not, in truth, wholly unmoved, but it was the actress in her wrung her hands.

"I hear you are going abroad," she cried. "That must be the hardest thing of all."

"I am not complaining, ma'am," said Doom.

"No, no; but oh! it is so sad, Baron—and your dear girl too, so sweet and nice——"

The Baron grew impatient; the "something of importance" was rather long of finding an expression, and he took the liberty of interrupting.

"Quite so, ma'am," said he, "but there was something in particular you had to tell me. Mungo, as I mentioned, is waiting me at the quay, and time presses, for we have much to do before we leave next week."

A look of relief came to Mrs Petullo's face.

"Next week!" she cried. "Oh then, that goes far to set my mind at ease." Some colour came to her cheeks; she trifled with a handkerchief. "What I wished to say, Baron, was that your daughter and—and—and the French gentleman, with whom we are glad to hear she is like to make a match of it, could not be away from this part of the country a day too soon. I overheard a curious thing the other day, it is only fair I should tell you, for it concerns your friend the French gentleman, and it was that Simon MacTaggart knew the Frenchman was back in your house and threatened trouble. There may be nothing in it, but I would not put it past the same person, who is capable of any wickedness."

"It is not the general belief, ma'am," said the Baron, "but I'll take your word for it, and, indeed, I have long had my own suspicions. Still, I think the same gentleman has had his wings so recently clipped that we need not be much put about at his threats."

"I have it on the best authority that he broods mischief," said she.

"The best authority," repeated Doom, with never a doubt as to what that was. "Well, it may be, but I have no fear of him. Once, I'll confess, he troubled me, but the man is now no more than a rotten kail-stock so far as my household is concerned. I thank God that Olivia is happy!"

"And so do I, I'm sure, with all my heart," chimed in the lady. "And that is all the

more reason why the Count—you see we know his station—should be speedily out of the way of molestation, either from the law or Simon MacTaggart."

Doom made to bring the interview to a conclusion. "As to the Count," said he, "you can take my word for it, he is very well able to look after himself, as Drimdarroch, or MacTaggart, or whatever is the Chamberlain's whim to call himself, knows very well by now. Drimdarroch, indeed! I could be kicking him myself for his fouling of an honest old name."

"Kicking!" said she; "I wonder at your leniency. I cannot but think you are far from knowing the worst of Simon MacTaggart."

"The worst!" said Doom. "That's between himself and hell, but I know as much as most, and it's enough to make me sure the man's as boss as an empty barrel. He was once a sort of friend of mine, till twenty years ago my wife grew to hate the very mention of his name. Since then I've seen enough of him at a distance to read the plausible rogue in his very step. The man wears every bawbee virtue he has like a brooch in his bonnet; and now when I think of it, I would not dirty my boots with him."

Mrs Petullo's lips parted. She hovered a second or two on a disclosure that explained the wife's antipathy of twenty years ago, but it involved confession of too intimate a footing on her own part with the Chamberlain, and she said no more.

CHAPTER XXXIX.—BETRAYED BY A BALLAD.

Some days passed and a rumour went about the town, in its origin as undiscoverable as the birthplace of the winds. It engaged the seamen on the tiny trading vessels at the quay, and excited the eagerest speculation in Ludovic's inn. Women put down their water-stoups at the wells and shook mysterious heads over hints of Sim MacTaggart's history. No one for a while had a definite story, but in all the innuendoes the Chamberlain figured vaguely as an evil influence. That he had slain a man in some parts abroad was the first and the least astonishing of the crimes laid to his charge, though the fact that he had never made a brag of it was counted sinister; but, by-and-by, surmise and sheer imagination gave place to a commonly accepted tale that Simon had figured in divers escapades in France with the name Drimdarroch; that he had betrayed men and women there, and that the Frenchman had come purposely to Scotland seeking for him. It is the most common of experiences that the world will look for years upon a man admiringly and still be able to recall a million things to his discredit when he is impeached with some authority. It was so in this case. The very folks who had loved best to hear the engaging flageolet, feeling the springs of some nobility bubble up in them at the bidding of its player, and drunk with him and laughed with him and ever

esteemed his free gentility, were the readiest to recall features of his character and incidents of his life that—as they put it—ought to have set honest men upon their guard. The tale went seaward on the gab-barts, and landward, even to Lorn itself, upon carriers' carts and as the richest part of the packman's budget. Furthermore, a song or two were made upon the thing, that even yet old women can recall in broken stanzas, and of one of these, by far the best informed, Petullo's clerk was the reputed author.

As usual, the object of the scandal was for a while unconscious. He went about experiencing a new aloofness in his umquhile friends, and finally concluded that it was due to his poor performance in front of the foreigner on the morning of the ball, and that but made him the more venomously ruminant upon revenge. In these days he haunted the avenues like a spirit, brooding on his injuries, pondering the means of a retaliation: there were no hours of manumission in the inn; the reed was still. And yet, to do him justice, there was even then the frank and suave exterior; no boorish awkward silence in his ancient gossips made him lose his jocularity; he continued to embellish his conversation with morals based on universal kindness and goodwill.

At last the thunder broke, for the scandal reached the castle, and was there overheard

by the Duchess in a verse of the ballad sung under her window by a gardener's boy. She made some inquiries, and thereafter went straight to her husband.

"What is this I hear about your Chamberlain?" she asked.

Argyll drew down his brows and sighed. "My Chamberlain?" said he. "It must be something dreadful by the look of her Grace the Duchess. What is it this time? High treason, or marriage, or the need of it? Or has old Knapdale died by a blessed disposition and left him a fortune? That would save me the performance of a very unpleasant duty."

"It has gone the length of scurrilous songs about our worthy gentleman. The town has been ringing with scandals about him for a week, and I never heard a word about it till half-an-hour ago."

"And so you feel defrauded, my dear, which is natural enough, being a woman as well as a duchess. I am glad to know that so squalid a story should be so long of reaching your ears: had it been anything to anybody's credit you would have been the first to learn of it. To tell the truth, I've heard the song myself, and if I have seemed unnaturally engaged for a day or two it is because I have been in a quandary as to what I should do. Now that you know the story, what do you advise, my dear?"

"A mere woman must leave that to the Lord Justice-General," she replied. "And now that your Chamberlain

turns out a greater scamp than I thought him, I'm foolish enough to be sorry for him."

"And so am I," said the Duke, and looked about the shelves of books lining the room. "Here's a multitude of counsellors; a great deal of the world's wisdom so far as it has been reduced to print, and I'll swear I could go through it from end to end without learning how I should judge a problem like Sim MacTaggart."

She would have left him then, but he stopped her with a smiling interrogation. "Well?" he said.

She waited.

"What about the customary privilege?" he went on.

"What is that?"

"Why, you have not said 'I told you so.'"

She smiled at that. "How stupid of me!" said she. "Oh! but you forgave my Frenchman, and for that I owe you some consideration."

"Did I, faith?" said he. "'Twas mighty near the compounding of a felony, a shocking lapse in a Justice-General. To tell the truth, I was only too glad, in MacTaggart's interest, while he was ill, to postpone disclosures so unpleasant as are now the talk of the country; and, like you, I find him infinitely worse in these disclosures than I guessed."

The Duchess went away, the Duke grew grave, reflecting on his duty. What it clearly was he had not decided until it was late in the evening, and then he sent for his Chamberlain.

CHAPTER XL.—THE DAY OF JUDGMENT.

Simon went to the library and saw plainly that the storm was come.

"Sit down, Simon, sit down," said his Grace, and carefully sharpened a pen.

The Chamberlain subsided in a chair; crossed his legs; made a mouth as if to whistle. There was a vexatious silence in the room till the Duke got up and stood against the chimney-piece and spoke.

"Well," said he, "I could be taking a liberty with the old song and singing 'Roguary Parts Good Company' if I were not, so far as music goes, as timber as the table there and in anything but a key for music even if I had the faculty. Talking about music, you have doubtless not heard the ingenious ballant connected with your name and your exploits. It has been the means of informing her Grace upon matters I had preferred she knew nothing about, because I like to have the women I regard believe the world much better than it is. And it follows that you and I must bring our long connection to an end. When will it be most convenient for my Chamberlain to send me his resignation after 'twelve years of painstaking and intelligent service to the Estate,' as we might be saying on the customary silver salver?"

Simon cursed within but outwardly never quailed.

"I know nothing about a ballant," said he coolly, "but

as for the rest of it, I thank God I can be taking a hint as ready as the quickest. Your Grace no doubt has reasons. And I'll make bold to say the inscription it is your humour to suggest would not be anyway extravagant, for the twelve years have been painstaking enough, whatever about their intelligence, of which I must not be the judge myself."

"So far as that goes, sir," said the Duke, "you have been a pattern. And it is your gifts that make your sins the more heinous: a man of a more sluggish intelligence might have had the ghost of an excuse for failing to appreciate the utmost loathsomeness of his sins."

"Oh! by the Lord Harry, if it is to be a sermon——!" cried Simon, jumping to his feet.

"Keep your chair, sir! keep your chair like a man!" said the Duke. "I am thinking you know me well enough to believe there is none of the common moralist about me. I leave the preaching to those with a better conceit of themselves than I could afford to have of my indifferent self. No preaching, cousin, no preaching, but just a word among friends, even if it were only to explain the reason for our separation."

The Chamberlain resumed his chair defiantly and folded his arms.

"I'll be cursed if I see the need for all this preamble," said

he; "but your Grace can fire away. It need never be said that Simon MacTaggart was feared to account for himself when the need happened."

"Within certain limitations, I daresay that is true," said the Duke.

"I aye liked a tale to come to a brisk conclusion," said the Chamberlain, with no effort to conceal his impatience.

"This one will be as brisk as I can make it," said his Grace. "Up till the other day I gave you credit for the virtue you claim—the readiness to answer for yourself when the need happened. I was under the delusion that your duel with the Frenchman was the proof of it."

"Oh, damn the Frenchman!" cried the Chamberlain with contempt and irritation. "I am ready to meet the man again with any arm he chooses."

"With any arm!" said the Duke dryly. "'Tis always well to have a whole one, and not one with a festering sore, as on the last occasion. Oh yes," he went on, seeing Simon change colour, "you observe I have learned about the old wound, and, what is more, I know exactly where you got it."

"Your Grace seems to have trustworthy informants," said the Chamberlain less boldly, but in no measure abashed. "I got that wound through your own hand as surely as if you had held the foil that gave it, for the whole of this has risen, as you ought to know, from your sending me to France."

"And that is true, in a sense, my good sophist. But I was, in that, the unconscious and blameless link in your accursed destiny. I had you sent to France on a plain mission. It was not, I make bold to say, a mission on which the Government would have sent any man but a shrewd one and a gentleman, and I was mad enough to think Simon MacTaggart was both. When you were in Paris as our agent——"

"Fah!" cried Simon, snapping his fingers and drawing his face in a grimace. "Agent, quo' he! for God's sake take your share of it and say spy and be done with it!"

The Duke shrugged his shoulders, listening patiently to the interruption. "As you like," said he. "Let us say spy, then. You were to learn what you could of the Pretender's movements, and incidentally you were to intromit with certain of our settled agents at Versailles. Doubtless a sort of espionage was necessary to the same. But I make bold to say the duty was no ignoble one so long as it was done with some sincerity and courage, for I count the spy in an enemy's country is engaged upon the gallantest enterprise of war, using the shrewdness that alone differs the quarrel of the man from the fury of the beast, and himself the more admirable because his task is a thousand times more dangerous than if he fought with the claymore in the field."

"Doubtless! doubtless!" said the Chamberlain. "That's an old tale between the two of us,

but you should hear the other side upon it."

"No matter; we gave you the credit and the reward of doing your duty as you engaged, and yet you mixed the business up with some extremely dirty work no sophistry of yours or mine will dare defend. You took our money, MacTaggart—and you sold us! Sit down, sit down and listen like a man! You sold us—there's the long and the short of it; and you sold our friends at Versailles to the very people you were sent yourself to act against. Counter-sap with a vengeance! We know now where Bertin got his information. You betrayed us and the woman Cécile Favart in the one filthy transaction."

The Chamberlain showed in his face that the blow was home. His mouth broke, and he grew as grey as a rag.

"And that's the way of it?" he said, after a moment's silence.

"That's the way of it," said the Duke. "She was as much the agent—let us say the spy, then—as you were yourself, and seems to have brought more cunning to the trade than did our simple Simon himself. If her friend Montaignon had not come here to look for you, and thereby put us on an old trail we had abandoned, we would never have guessed the source of her information."

"I'll be cursed if I have a dog's luck!" cried Simon.

Argyll looked pityingly at him. "So!" said he. "You mind our old country saying,

Ni droch dhuine dàn da féin—a bad man makes his own fate?"

"Do you say so?" cried MacTaggart, with his first sign of actual insolence, and the Duke sighed.

"My good Simon," said he, "I do not require to tell you so, for you know it very well. What I would add is that all I have said is, so far as I am concerned, between ourselves: that's my only tribute to our old acquaintanceship. Only I can afford to have no more night escapades at Doom or anywhere else with my fencibles, and so, Simon, the resignation cannot be a day too soon."

"Heaven forbid that I should delay it a second longer than is desirable, and your Grace has it here and now! A fine *fracas* all this about a puddock-eating Frenchman! I do not value him nor his race to the extent of a pin. And as for your Grace's Chamberlain—well, Simon MacTaggart has done very well hitherto on his own works and merits."

"You may find, for all that," said his Grace, "that they were all summed up in a few words—'he was a far-out cousin to the Duke.' *Sic itur ad astra.*"

At that Simon put on his hat and laughed with an eerie and unpleasant stridency. He never said another word, but left the room. The sound of his unnatural merriment rang on the stair as he descended.

"The man is fey," said the Duke to himself, listening with a startled gravity.

CHAPTER XLI.—DAWN.

Simon MacTaggart went out possessed by the devils of hatred and chagrin. He saw himself plainly for what he was in truth—a pricked bladder, his career come to an ignoble conclusion, the single honest scheme he had ever set his heart on brought to nought, and his vanity already wounded sorely at the prospect of a contemptuous world to be faced for the remainder of his days. All this from the romantics of a Frenchman who walked through life in the step of a polonaise, and a short season ago was utterly unaware that such a man as Simon MacTaggart existed, or that a woman named Olivia bloomed, a very flower, among the wilds! At whatever angle he viewed the congregated disasters of the past few weeks he saw Count Victor in their background—a sardonic, smiling, light-hearted Nemesis; and if he detested him previously as a merely possible danger, he hated him now with every fibre of his being as the cause of this upheaval.

And then, in his way that is not uncommon with the sinner, he must pity himself because circumstances had so consistently conspired against him.

He had come into the garden after the interview with Argyll had made it plain that the darkest passages in his servant's history were known to him, and had taken off his hat to get the night breeze on his brow which was wet with perspiration. The snow was still

on the ground; among the laden bushes, the silent soaring trees of fir and ash, it seemed as if this was no other than the land of outer darkness whereto the lost are driven at the end. It maddened him to think of what he had been brought to: he shook his fist in a childish and impotent petulance at the spacious unregarding east where Doom lay—the scene of all his passions.

“God’s curse on the breed of meddlers!” he said. “Another month and I was out of these gutters, and hell no more to tempt me. To be the douce good-man, and all the tales of storm forgotten by the neighbours that may have kent them; to sit perhaps with bairns—her bairns and mine—about my knee, and never a twinge of the old damnable inclinations, and the flageolet going to the honestest tunes. All lost! All lost for a rat that takes to the hold of an infernal ship, and comes here to chew at the ropes that dragged me to salvation. This is where it ends! It’s the judgment come a day ower soon for Sim MacTaggart. But Sim MacTaggart will make the rat rue his meddling.”

He had come out with no fixed idea of what he next should do, but one step seemed now imperative—he must go to Doom, otherwise his blood would burst every vein in his body. He set forth with the stimulus of fury for the barracks where his men lay, of whom half-a-dozen at least were his

to the gate of the Pit itself, less scrupulous even than himself because more ignorant, possessed of but one or two impulses—a foolish affection for him and an inherited regard for rapine too rarely to be indulged in these tame latter days. To call them out, to find them armed and ready for any enterprise of his, was a matter of brief time. They set out knowing nothing at all of his object, and indifferent so long as this adorable gentleman was to lead them.

When they came to Doom the tide was full and round about it, so they retired upon the hillside, sheltering in a little plantation of fir through which they could see the stars, and Doom dense black against them without a sign of habitation.

And yet Doom, upon the side that faced the sea, was not asleep. Mungo was busy upon the preparations for departure, performing them in a funereal spirit, whimpering about the vacant rooms with a grief that was trivial compared with that of Doom himself, who waited for the dawn as if it were to bring him to the block, or of Olivia, whose pillow was wet with unavailing tears. It was their last night in Doom. At daybreak Mungo was to convey them to the harbour, where they should embark upon the vessel that was to bear them to the Lowlands. It seemed as if the sea-gulls came earlier than usual to wheel and cry about the rock, half-guessing that it was so soon to be untenanted, and finally, as it is to-day, the grass-grown mound

of memories. Olivia rose and went to her window to look out at them, and saw them as yet but vague, grey, floating shapes slanting against the paling stars.

And then the household rose; the boat nodded to the leeward of the rock, with its mast stepped, its sail billowing with a rustle in the faint air, and Mungo at the sheet. The dawn came slowly, but fast enough for the departing, and the landward portion of the rock was still in shadow when Olivia stepped forth with a tear-stained face, and a trembling hand on Victor's arm. He shared her sorrow, but was proud and happy too that her trials, as he hoped, were over. They took their seat in the boat and waited for the Baron. Now the tide was down, the last of it running in tiny rivulets upon the sand between the mainland and the rock, and Simon and his gang came over silently. Simon led, and turned the corner of the tower hastily with his sword in his hand to find the Baron emerging. He had not seen the boat and its occupants, but the situation seemed to flash upon him, and he uttered a cry of rage.

Doom drew back under the frowning eyebrow of what had been his home, tugged the weapon from his scabbard and threw himself on guard.

"This is kind, indeed," he said in a pause of his assailant's confusion at finding this was not the man he sought. "You have come to say 'Good-bye.' On guard, black dog, on guard!"

"*So dhuit mata!*"—here then is for you," cried Sim, and waving back his followers, engaged with a rasp of steel. It lasted but a moment: Doom crouched a little upon bending knees, with a straight arm, parrying the assault of a point that flew in wild disorder. He broke ground for a few yards with feints in quarte. He followed on a riposte with a lunge—short, sharp, conclusive, for it took his victim in the chest and passed through at the other side with a thud of the hilt against his body. Sim fell with a groan, his company clustering round him, not wholly forgetful of retaliation, but influenced by his hand that forbade their interference with his enemy.

"Clean up your filth!" said Doom in the Gaelic, sheathing his sword and turning to join his daughter. "He took Drimdarroch from me, and now, by God! he's welcome to Doom."

"Not our old friends, surely?" said Count Victor, looking backward at the cluster of men.

"The same," said Doom, and kept his counsel further.

Count Victor put his arm round Olivia's waist. The boat's prow fell off; the sail filled; she ran with a pleasant ripple through the waves, and there followed her a cry that only Doom of all the company knew was a coronach, followed by the music of Sim Mac-Taggart's flageolet.

It rose above the ripple of the waves, above the screaming of the birds, finally stilling the coronach, and the air it gave an utterance to was the same that had often charmed the midnight bower, failing at the last abruptly as it had always done before.

"By heavens! it is my Mary's favourite air, and that was all she knew of it," said Doom, and his face grew white with memory and a speculation.

"Had he found the end of that air," said Count Victor, "he had found, as he said himself, another man. But I, perhaps, had never found Olivia!"

A VILLAGE IN THE VAL D'OR.

BY MRS P. G. HAMERTON.

VISIT THE SECOND.

WE had been so pleased with our holiday in the Val d'Or that we intended to return if we could find lodgings, for everything in the Château My-pont was let. After a long search, an old widow lady was applied to, and though she had never contemplated before the possibility of letting part of her house—nor desired to do so—she consented to give us the first floor for the same rent we had paid at the château, but on condition that we should take the rooms “as they were.” For Mme. S. had been rather alarmed at the idea of a change in her regular habits—habits that she had never dreamt of altering to the end of her life; for she was now eighty-three, and did not either expect or wish to remain much longer in this world.

The house itself was a strange compilation of buildings, which seemed to have neither front nor back, the main entrance being oddly placed behind, in a steep, narrow lane, whilst the door was pinched and low, not bigger than those in the rooms, and like them having square panes of glass in the upper part, like a window. Yet it was the outer door opening into the public street, and the only protection against house-breakers—but I was quietly assured that house-breakers

were unknown in Le Bourg-neuf.

It was a curious feature of the place that space had been most generously granted where it was least wanted, and strictly economised where it would have been desirable. There were lots of crazy passages and corridors on each floor, and under the house vaulted ones leading to the most unexpected places, besides endless landings, staircases, and closets, so bewildering that we agreed at once to call Mme. S.'s house “The Labyrinth.” Later on this enigma was explained by our landlady: she told me that, long ago, two near relatives of hers having got married, and being unwilling to be separated from their family, had bought the two houses adjoining the parental habitation, and made openings in the walls, and devised those wonderfully elaborate means of communication which had so much puzzled me. The good lady did not attempt to conceal her proud satisfaction in these arrangements, in which she had had a share, for she ended her explanations by saying, “*Et nous avons été nos propres architectes!*” Then she murmured in a saddened tone, “At that time friends could not bear to live apart, and now they cannot agree to live together,” which made me fear

that poor Mme. S. deeply felt the melancholy solitude of her old age.

In some respects she was wonderful for her years; though she moved slowly, she was almost constantly seen walking noiselessly about the house, garden, or village. Always clad in weeds—for she had successively lost her eight children, a beloved sister, a niece whom she had adopted, and lastly her husband. She was nervously restless, and often startled us at first, when she stole at night past our glass doors, dimly descried like a black shadow by the flickering light of her small lamp.

On our arrival Mme. S. had courteously showed us our rooms, which were in some respects superior to those we had had at the château. They were larger and incomparably better furnished. The previous year I had slept upon a small iron bedstead; but now my bed was made of fine walnut-wood, like the chest of drawers and the handsome clothes-press which quite filled up one side of the room, with the addition of a small writing-table. My bed was canopied, and, with its red curtains and green fringe to match the counterpane, lent quite a comfortable aspect to the otherwise somewhat cold and monastic appearance of the room. For it must be remembered that we had accepted the lodgings “as they were,” therefore the many tokens of our landlady’s piety had kept their places, and the marble tops of our drawers looked more like altars than

anything else. In the middle of mine there was a plaster cast of the Virgin holding the child Jesus in her arms, with an emblem of the Sacred Heart depending from her neck. On each side vases of paper flowers under glass shades, and behind several portraits of saints (patrons of the family) hanging on the wall. At the head of our beds the *bénitiers* were filled with holy water, and surmounted by shrivelled sprigs of boxwood, which had been blessed on a certain Palm Sunday—how long ago? . . . Mme. S. alone could remember, as she remembered to which of her children had belonged the chaplets of beads festooned about the looking-glasses.

After surveying the apartments we unpacked our boxes and distributed their contents among the drawers and closets put at our disposal. I noticed that the key of the clothes-press had been left in the lock, though it was not one of the pieces of furniture which I had been told I might use, and when Mme. S. came up to inquire if we wanted anything more, I begged her to remove that key, and to keep it. She looked surprised, and whilst I was explaining that I would rather not be responsible for what there might be in the press, she seemed almost hurt. “Can you suppose, then, that my confidence in you is not perfect?” she asked in an injured tone.

“Well, madame, a servant girl will have access to the room——”

“And it would be just the

same if a dozen of our girls had access to it," was the decisive reply. "At Le Bourg-neuf stealing, robbing, and pilfering are unknown abominations."

I was glad to hear it, and this assurance helped to reconcile me to our glass doors, which would have opposed but little resistance to a determined house-breaker. The inconvenience—if not danger—of these glass doors did not appear to have struck any one before us. Yet the thin, transparent, worn-out muslin curtains were no protection against a clear view of the interior to any one outside. This peculiarity of our lodgings obliged me to put to a double use a shawl of Mme. S.'s, which she kindly added as an ornamental cover to our centre table, and which I hung up as a door-curtain whenever privacy became desirable.

Probably the incident of the key had suggested new thoughts to Mme. S., for presently she explained the working of the elaborate bright steel fastening of the press, and when the big doors were open, she asked if I should not like some of the shelves for myself. "Of course they would be very convenient, but I did not want to trouble —" However, before I had time to finish my polite sentence, Mme. S., despite her eighty-three years, was perched upon a chair piling up sheets, bed-covers, and pillow-cases tightly upon one another on the upper shelves, to let me have the use of the lower ones. In the course of our stay we had repeated tokens of this thoughtfulness for our comfort, which

prevented us, in some measure, from feeling as acutely as we might have done otherwise the disappointment of not being really in the country,—for though we were so near our former dwelling, the situation was quite different.

Each day brought with it some new proof of our landlady's kindness: for instance, she soon noticed that a wet cloth was passed every morning over our tiled floors (on account of the dust), and her solicitude for the health of my mother made her seek, in her numerous closets, for a carpet to be placed under the dinner-table to avoid the effects of damp. As I passed before the closet in which she was rummaging with her feeble hands, I heard her panting in the effort to disengage what she needed from a pile of other things. I asked if I could be of use. "Yes," she said, "and I shall be very much obliged, for though I have the carpet for your room, I want that other one, which I am not strong enough to pull out. It is for my *femme de ménage*, whose little girl is paralysed and subject to fits at times, when she falls out of her bed on the hard floor, and if her mother is out at work, the poor thing may remain helpless a long time and catch cold. It just came to my mind that I had a good carpet somewhere, and that, folded up and put beside the bed of the little martyr, it might prevent her from being hurt in her falls." I then recollected that old Mme. S. contented herself with a narrow rug in her bed-

room, and a thin mat under her dinner-table, yet thought it quite natural to give her best carpet in charity. Faithful to the old traditions of the *petite bourgeoisie* (like several other families of the place), she had few wants, and did not even keep a servant. It was just the same at the château—a *femme de ménage* coming regularly, and other women to help in washing, cleaning, sewing, &c., as many, and as often as needful, but no servants. Their constant presence is considered obtrusive, and as involving a diminution of their master's privacy and freedom, whilst the occasional want of them is not greatly felt, owing to the *vignerottes*, always ready to lend a hand, at least where there are vineyards—that is to say, in the majority of cases.

We had only to cross the road in order to reach the flat stone over the rivulet, and to open the wickets which gave access to the garden of the château, where we had been invited to go as often as we pleased. We often met our former host and hostess there, and once Mons. L. told me that, on account of the great heat, the grapes were three weeks in advance on an average year—therefore I was sure this time to see the vintage. The grapes were only in moderate quantity, but it was hoped that the quality would be exceptional; still, as we had a thunderstorm daily, I inquired if the rain would not prove injurious. "No," was the answer; "those warm showers of short duration were quite beneficial at this stage of the growth; they swelled the grapes

and softened the skins." However, the almost regular formation of thunder-clouds, thickening as the heat of the day increased, and bursting towards evening in a deluge of rain, did not seem promising to me. Neither was it agreeable, for how was it possible to ramble about in the sultry, suffocating glare of the red-copper sun, expecting, moreover, to be drenched later on by the inky clouds which clung to the hill-sides like gigantic black bats, until they were either driven away by a sudden squall, or sent by the lurid lightnings to open their cataracts upon the valley?

At first sight, when we came to our new lodgings, I did not see how it would be possible to cook anything at home—though a little charcoal stove had been placed on the landing by my bedroom door—for there was no escape for the suffocating fumes of the charcoal, and they might easily have smothered us. Mme. S., however, perceiving the danger, told me that I was welcome to leave open the door and window of a lumber-room just opposite, which looked upon the garden.

It was a strange room, still furnished with a bed and its bedding complete—drawers, tables, and clothes-press; but, like several other rooms in the same house, it had not been swept or dusted for more than twenty years, and broken chairs and disjointed tables, as they became useless, had been accumulated in a pile upon the bed. Rusted iron implements of all descriptions, with fowling-pieces, fishing-rods, mice-eaten nets, were stuffed in the corners;

and the mantelpiece, the drawers, and tables were covered with all manner of cracked and chipped pottery.

The floor itself was entirely taken up by empty boxes, bottles, and what not, the whole under a uniform coating of dust and cobwebs. On closer acquaintance with this house, I came to the conclusion that for at least fifty years nothing whatever had gone out of it; no rubbish had ever been thrown away—and there were cart-loads of it in the closets where colonies of moths had domiciled themselves among woollen blankets, pillows, and featherbeds innumerable. In the rooms the presses and drawers contained, besides good linen and old-fashioned clothing, nameless relics, such as faded bits of ribbon and dried leaves and flowers, whose history Mme. S. only could have told.

It was embarrassing to accept the offer that had just been made, for I did not see how I could possibly reach the window through all the obstructions blocking the way to it. But I soon noticed that a general overhauling was taking place, at the instigation, and under the supervision, of our landlady. It must not be supposed for a moment that the useless objects were got rid of on this memorable occasion. No, indeed! They were merely transferred to a sort of *magasin* close by, and, when their removal was completed, Mme. S. told me that I might use the room if I found it convenient. Of course it was exceedingly convenient, and it afforded me, besides, quite a

new experience. As I watched the boiling of our morning milk, under the joint protection of a lame St John carved in wood and of a Good Shepherd whose lamb had disappeared, I wondered at the state of mind which had induced the former occupier of this room so oddly to place the little twigs of blessed boxwood that were stuck into the candlesticks and match-box, and fastened to every nail in the wall. At the same time I could see Mme. S. already dressed for the early mass in her long black shawl and *crêpe* bonnet, scissors in hand to cut the flowers which she faithfully carried to her lost ones every day of her life (unless prevented by illness), now to the cemetery on the hill of Mercurey, and next to that upon the hill of Touches—a remarkable feat for a person eighty-three years of age.

One damp, misty morning, when I descried her through the drooping vines, occupied as usual by her pious care, I ventured to remonstrate; for I heard her cough, and knew of her night having been sleepless with suffocation—as was too often the case. “Perhaps you are right,” she answered. “And perhaps if my niece had been able to carry the bouquet (which she does now and then), I should have let her go in my stead; but she is too busy to-day, and I do not wish *them* to miss their flowers. . . .” Poor affectionate heart! I understood what solace this self-imposed duty brought to it, and what an importance was attached to its fulfilment. Indeed, Mme. S.

had already told me several times that she firmly believed herself to be in actual communion of soul with all her lost ones.

If I did not see so much of the open country now as I had done from the château, there was a sort of compensation in the spectacle offered by the street-life and also by the home-life of the inhabitants, of which I could observe a good deal from our windows. Its most striking features are that the greater part of it is spent out of doors—at least in summer-time—and that people do not seem to desire any privacy. I could see men coming out of their houses in the early morning, and washing themselves in the stream, after loosening their shirt-collars and turning up their sleeves. I could watch the cooking of several households, as it proceeded in their courtyards, upon charcoal stoves. Babies eat their porridge, or it is administered to them, on the outside doorsteps; and family meals are frequently partaken of in gardens quite open to the public gaze. In the afternoons women and girls congregate into small groups to do their sewing, or nursing, and prattling, on the shady side of the street. The relatives of Mme. S., who lived in a separate house (though it formed part of *The Labyrinth*), took *all* their meals under the acacias of the courtyard, unless it rained.

This outdoor life, together with the great heat of the summer months, accounts for the brown skins of most of the

inhabitants, particularly of the children, who take no precautions against being sunburnt—and in consequence look like so many little Arabs—and of the old folks, who no longer care about their appearance. The women of the working class may always be seen with their large-brimmed hats, even inside the houses, for they are so often out again that they do not take the trouble of removing them. It seems as if they could not bear to miss the sights of the street for a quarter of an hour together, and it was very funny to spy them appearing suddenly, and in succession, at every window and on the threshold, even whilst cleaning their rooms, dressing their children, or washing up their crockery.

After rather a prolonged walk on the hills in search of a peculiar kind of mushrooms which grow there abundantly, I was coming back home, on a certain evening of August, when my attention was drawn to several groups of men and women talking volubly, with even more animation than usual. Before I reached our door I was surrounded by neighbours eager to be the first to communicate the news—such romantic and exciting news! . . . Well, the previous night, some men coming out of a café had seen in a corner of the road, against a wall, a dark heap; and on coming close to it discovered that it was a woman — she must be dead drunk, they thought, for she neither answered nor moved when shaken and spoken to. But in going to their work on

the following morning, they saw the same shape still in the same place, and began to fear that the woman might be dead. They examined her more closely: she was still warm, but appeared to be exhausted or in a swoon. They lifted her up and carried her to the chemist's shop whilst the doctor was being sent for. After rather a long time she partially recovered, and in a few broken words attempted to explain that though she understood French, she could not speak it readily; and little by little, some restoratives having been administered, she contrived to unfold her piteous tale.

She was a Spanish lady, the wife of a commanding officer fighting in Cuba, and when her husband had been ordered to the seat of war, her distress at the fear of what might befall him had been such that nothing could soothe it except the idea of going on a pilgrimage to Lourdes and praying there for his safety. One of her friends was a lady situated like herself, so she proposed that they should go together, and her friend assented. They decided to walk the whole way, and to beg for their food and shelter. It was impossible to make out how they came to be separated, but it seemed that they did not agree on what would be the best way to reach Lourdes; and indeed this poor stranger must have mistaken Paray-le-Monial for Lourdes, having come in this direction. Be it as it may, she had trudged on in rain and heat, had slept in barns or haystacks, and only

fed upon what she could obtain from charitable people, who, unable to understand her speech or even her motive, could but look upon her with suspicion, and mistake her for a wanderer out of her mind—or worse still, as had just happened. It was now quite impossible for the worn-out pilgrim to proceed, and the young doctor, who was doing his twenty-eight days of military service at Chalon, volunteered to go to the colonel in command of the place, and to ask for his advice. The colonel showed himself most kind and considerate, and sent his carriage to take the lady to Chalon, where he would provide for her present wants, and consider what might be done to send her back home to Spain after she had recruited her strength.

We heard afterwards that her name was only disclosed to the colonel, and also that she carried, secreted under her tattered garments, a little bag filled with jewels and precious stones to be laid upon the altar of Notre Dame de Lourdes as a propitiatory offering; and rather than break her vow by selling them to obtain food, she had starved herself almost to death. This last part may have been an invention of the popular mind, to turn a simple story into a legend; but it may also be true, considering the state of mind of this poor lady. In that case it is to be hoped that she found at Chalon a priest wise enough to relieve her from her rash vow.

I noticed that Mme. S. was the only person who did not wonder, and who thought that

the Spanish lady had acted quite naturally in asking for the highest protection she could think of for her husband.

"But she left her two children behind!" I exclaimed. "Well, she must have left them under good care, you may be sure, devoted to her affections as she has shown herself to be. And, of course, her trust in the holy Virgin Mary gave her the assurance that the protection she came to ask—through such hardships—would be extended to her children; for it was an increase of her sacrifice to have left them behind."

I clearly saw that Mme. S. would have been capable of acting in the same manner, for by this time she had grown very confidential, and I could read what was passing in her simple and kindly mind. She had told me of her maternal hopes eight times renewed, and as many times buried in the little sunny cemetery on the hill-slope of Touches. She had told me of the great love which had united her to a sister who, more fortunate than herself, had still two children gay and strong when she was bereft of her last one; and how this sister had said in great compassion, "I cannot bear to see you childless and desolate, and I will give you my little girl to bring up as your daughter; she will be your own child, and the boy will remain mine." But when the girl was thirteen, she also had to be taken to the cemetery on the hill-slope, to be buried by the side of her eight cousins—and Mme. S. sorrowfully submitted to the will of God.

Ever after she remained faith-

ful to these innocent memories, and sometimes an impulse moved her to show me some of their relics. A great cupboard was full of various toys, neatly displayed as for an exhibition. There was in a closet a beautiful little crib, too large for the cupboard, with its closed curtains dusty with the dust of fifty years, which were drawn aside by tremulous fingers to let me see a doll whose rest had lasted for half a century. In another closet, under a glass shade dimmed by cobwebs, I recognised such a *crèche* as the one I had been allowed to admire at my grandmother's when my baby behaviour had given satisfaction. Yes, the same "petit Jésus" was lying upon bits of straw in the same manger; but whereas my memory recalled the sumptuous attire of the Magi in their flowing silken mantles and gilt crowns, as well as the very pink cheeks, blue eyes, and rosy flesh of the divine babe in tinted wax (carefully preserved from the effects of too much light by being usually locked up in my grandmother's *secrétaire*), what my eyes presently beheld seemed both pitiful and touching. For the splendour of gilding and gorgeous hues had long been tarnished, and the clumsy little fingers which had so often removed and replaced the kings, the angels, the ox, and the sheep, had not always avoided the breaking of an arm here and of a leg there, nor the tearing of a few rents in the gossamer veil of the Virgin. Time had paled the faces of the small figures as well as their garments; it had deprived the

sheep of their soft fleeces and the angels of the gauze of their wings; but the prettily spotted birds' eggs offered by infantile faith to the infant God still retained their pristine colours, even in the broken shells, and doubtless Mme. S. recalled all the circumstances of each separate offering every time she paused before the *crèche*.

The "fête du Bourgneuf," which falls on the 22nd of August, is preceded by a curious fair—that of onions and garlic, and unimaginable quantities of them are brought for sale. Cart-loads are taken out for display on the *Place*, and along the village street, neatly spread out, and looking quite inviting. The rounded bulbs of garlic in their white or lilac parchment-like skins are strung in rows (called *chatnes*) upon a small plait of glistening straw, and the onions likewise, according to their size and species. There is plenty of choice amongst the small, button-shaped ones, pale yellow or white; the flat pink and red kinds, with a pungent taste, and the large, sweet, claret-tinted balls for *purées*. About ten in the morning all the *ménagères* and servants can be seen taking home their purchases, which must last till next year; for neither garlic nor onions can be cultivated to perfection in the soil of the Val d'Or. Before the onions are stored their skins are anxiously examined, as their thickness is believed to indicate the sort of winter one has to expect: if it is thin, the winter will be mild; if thick, severe and frosty.

The *fête* was spoilt by rain;

nevertheless the population congregated till past midnight around the three booths which formed the attractions of the day, together with the wooden horses. There was besides pistol- and rifle-shooting for men, lottery for women, and *pains-d'épices* and *bonbons* for children. We amused ourselves by watching for some time the ball in the hotel from our windows, and noticed that several of the young men did not sacrifice the pleasure of smoking to that of the dance, but preferred enjoying both at the same time.

The *bonbons* and *dragées* so temptingly displayed for the *fête* remind one of a characteristic incident connected with Mme. S., who once came with many apologies to take something out of the clothes-press in my room, which she meant to send as a prize to a yearly charity lottery, according to her old-established custom. It was a little parcel, neatly tied with a yellowish-white ribbon, and carefully protected by satin paper, which being removed, disclosed to our admiring eyes a much-adorned box of *dragées*, with gallant device of silver paper and spangled gauze. We declared it "very pretty," which of course was expected, but all the same acknowledged with pleasure. "Yes, they are always said to be very pretty, and they are longed for by those who hold tickets; for it is well known that I never miss giving one to each lottery. You see, my husband was *maire* for over twenty years, and at every marriage ceremony that he performed he was presented with one of these boxes, so that in

the long-run we had quite a stock of them." Happily, the elation that the unsophisticated Mme. S. experienced in thus fulfilling a charitable deed was not marred by the suspicion that *bonbons*, sweet ten or twelve years ago, might perhaps be somewhat rancid to-day.

Shortly after the drawing of the lottery, one morning at the beginning of September, I saw Mme. S. in the garden, but it was not her usual bouquet that she was carrying—no; for the first time it was replaced by a fine bunch of *chasselas-rose*. I wondered at such a deviation from her habits, and going to wish her good morning, I looked at the grapes, and remarked that they did not seem perfectly ripe yet. "They are not ripe enough to eat," she answered, "but nearly so; and this bunch being the most forward on the *treille*, I cut it as an offering to my sister's Virgin, as she used to do herself in her lifetime for the *fête* of Notre Dame de Septembre. . . . Would you like to see my sister's Virgin? It was a beautiful one, long ago." I assented, and she led the way to a garret hard by at the top of the house, where, in a somewhat dark corner, I could just make out a tall, grey, uncertain form, before which Mme. S. knelt and prayed for a short time. My eyes once accustomed to the dim light, I recognised a large plaster cast of the Virgin, begrimed by the damp and dust of many, many years, to whose right hand my landlady was fastening the new bunch of grapes, after relieving it of that of last year. And

all about the rough stand supporting the statue the floor was strewn with the dried-up or mouldered skeletons of ancient grapes. "You are perhaps surprised at this unseemly place of shelter for the *Sainte Vierge*," Mme. S. resumed in an undertone, as if she were in a church; "but we had no room of sufficient height to admit it after the niche in the garden crumbled to pieces; for it had been placed there in a bower by my sister's own hands—it is more easy of access to me here, in all weathers, especially during the *mois de Marie* [May], when I have to keep the little lamp burning whilst I recite the rosary, as my sister used to do every evening." The calling up of these memories seemed greatly soothing to the solitary lady, whose life had become a pious repetition of old rites—a shadow of the past.

Sometimes when the mornings were damp or stormy, I attempted to remonstrate against her appearing out of doors, for she suffered from chronic bronchitis and oppression, but she answered wistfully that she was ready to go when summoned. "It is not as when my husband lived," she would say; "he never allowed me to get up first, and only after ascertaining what the weather was like. In cold or damp I had to remain in bed till my room had been well warmed by a good fire—but now, no one cares, not even myself." Still at times she fancied that our presence had done her good. "*Vous m'avez porté bonheur,*"

she repeated on those occasions; "for now I can sleep several hours in the night, and I feel better in every way." In reality our sympathy diffused a little warmth in her chilled atmosphere, and awakened a responsive sentiment which made her feel conscious of an interest in life, as being of some importance still when she concerned herself with our comfort, which she did almost daily in some way or other.

Once, when I had accompanied Mme. S. to the church of Touches, we passed by a small vineyard enclosed within a good wall, and she told me of a curious custom connected with it, which had existed formerly, but had been abandoned on account of the abuses it engendered. On Easter Sunday it was incumbent on the churchwarden to place inside the church tables laden with tumblers and pitchers of wine, to which any one might help himself as freely as he pleased. In order to secure the fulfilment of this duty, the churchwarden was put in possession of "*deux ouvrées de vignes, situées sur le territoire de Touches, appelées La vigne de Pâques.*" This gift had been made with the intention of sustaining the communicants who came from distant villages, and who otherwise would have had to remain fasting till their return home. "*La vigne de Pâques*"—it was the vineyard we had just passed—is now considered as a fit remuneration for the services of the churchwarden.

A few days after the presentation of the first ripe grapes to

"Notre Dame de Septembre," we received a basketful of others from the château, and henceforward our landlady and our friends kept us well provided with them; but they were all under average quality for want of heat. Nevertheless it had become imperative to gather them, for the blackrot had appeared and was spreading rapidly. In consequence the proprietor of the château sent me word that on the 16th of September the *vinification* would begin, and that if I liked to be present he would give me all the necessary information. Accordingly I went to the press-shed and witnessed the coming in of the long carts, each bearing three vats or barrels containing the grapes just gathered, which were then mashed by a man standing up in the cart, who worked a heavy, long-handled pestle as if he were churning.

The contents of these barrels are first poured into a cylinder, and then into big vats, together with a certain quantity of sugar (according to the quality of the grapes) to undergo fermentation. After this the doors are closed carefully, and the process watched several times a-day to ascertain the proper time for drawing off the juice. The fermentation lasts from five to ten days, and it is curious to hear the great rumbling and boiling in the vats. The air of the place is so intoxicating that I could only remain in it for a few minutes at a time, and was obliged to go out repeatedly to free my lungs and nostrils from the alcohol.

Accidents are frequent at this

period when the state of the vats has to be ascertained, for their size is such that ladders are used to look over the top, when the alcoholic fumes sometimes overpower the watchers. These cases of asphyxia used to be much more numerous and fatal when men were employed to trample the grapes in the vats, they being exposed to the danger for a long time; and in case they fell, death resulted inevitably.

The juice of the grapes having run out of the vats, there is a residue (*marc*) which, put under a powerful press, yields an additional quantity of fluid to be mixed with the first and then poured into casks containing 225 litres, or into smaller ones called *feuilletes*, containing 132 litres only. The result of these operations is "le vin rouge nouveau."

For the preparation of white wines grapes are not made to ferment in the vats. As soon as they have passed through the cylinder the juice is transferred into *new* casks, with a small opening at the top to prevent their bursting during the fermentation. Red wine may be made out of white grapes; the colour is due to contact with the skins during fermentation, and is deeper and richer according to the quantity of tannin in them. A great proportion of white wine was made this year on that account, —the grapes lacking the necessary amount of tannin to give the ruby colour desirable for red Burgundy.

Every vine-grower distils a certain quantity of *eau-de-vie* from the residue of his grapes.

For this purpose an equal quantity of water is added to the *marc*, then distilled and put into small casks, where it is kept for some years before it is bottled "pour la vieillir"—that is, if it is meant for his own use. When intended for sale no such precautions are taken, because in casks spirits evaporate rapidly, and more has to be poured into them from time to time to fill up the empty space. It is called "*eau-de-vie de marc*," and it has a peculiar taste highly appreciated by amateurs.

A week after the *vinification* we received an invitation to go and taste the *vin nouveau* with some gentlemen who were authorities on the subject. The owner of the wines, Mons. L., had one of those pretty shallow cups of embossed silver, generally used for the purpose, which he filled up out of the cask and handed to me. I emptied it, and begged to be excused from giving an opinion, as I was no judge. The cup, held by its handle, was turned upside down, then rinsed with wine, and filled up again, to be presented in succession to each of us. The serious tasters did not swallow the wine—they used it as a sort of gargle, and turned aside to spit it out: it is, it appears, the orthodox and business-like manner of tasting wines. Then after a discursive confabulation they declared the quality to be superior to their expectations. I had not appreciated it myself; but I daresay I should not have appreciated the best of wines in that early stage, so I kept my own counsel. However, two months later I

was glad for the *viticulteurs* of the Val d'Or to see that the official price of their wines had been fixed at Beaune (where it is done yearly by a commission) as high as 245 francs *la pièce*—a little under £10.

And now as we were making our preparations for departure, Mme. S., still more restless than usual, slowly paced up and down the stairs, lingered in the closets, and wandered in the garden with a look of preoccupation which could not escape us. We wondered if she had lost something, for she seemed to be peering into all sorts of places. At last I ventured to approach the subject, in the hope of being perhaps able to help her. My surprise was great, however, when she simply said it was her wish to present us with a *souvenir*; but she had no idea what we would accept, and had been looking over all her possessions in search of some suitable object for the purpose. "I can put your mind at rest immediately, dear madame," I said to her, "for you have some Christmas roses in your garden of which I should be very glad to have a root. It is one of my favourite flowers in winter-time; and although I have bought two or three in Paris, it has been impossible to keep them healthy, because they are forced in hot-houses to make them blossom early—out of season—and they do not recover from this unnatural treatment."

The idea of making me a present of something I should care to have delighted my good landlady, but she entertained

some apprehension about my choice. "You will never be able to make Christmas roses thrive in close rooms, I fear," she said reflectively. "I do not intend to keep them prisoners in my rooms except to enjoy their blossoms," I answered. "When their flowering season is over they will be put into boxes upon a large balcony, where they will have enough space and fresh air to rally from their temporary confinement." "Since you have a balcony, I wish you to take out from my garden all that you may fancy, and I shall see that it is properly packed for the journey. . . . Le Bourgneuf will see you again," Mme. S. went on a little sadly, "but not I. My days must be numbered, and I shall be happy indeed to meet with my dear ones; but I hope you may remember me sometimes when you see the flowers of your Christmas roses."

It was not without some difficulty that I convinced Mme. S. of my inability to take more than what I had asked; and despite all I could say, she caused two beautiful climbing rose-trees to be packed with the hellebores.

In bidding adieu to each other we were not very eloquent in words, but our eyes were dim and our hands separated reluctantly.

And now throughout the summer months my Parisian balcony sheds upon the passers-by, together with the sweet-scented petals of jasmine and honeysuckle, the wine-red roses of the Val d'Or.

BETWEEN THE LINES.—CONCLUSION.

WILLOUGHBY enjoyed his life in New Zealand immensely. The Governor was a man of great literary attainments as well as being a statesman of the first rank, and times were extremely interesting: he and his chief were on the best of terms, but here came one of the checks which marred Willoughby's career.

He had been just a year abroad when he heard that his father had been suddenly stricken by paralysis. Willoughby recognised at once the fact that there was something he cared for more than his future. He threw up his appointment and went home. He hardly dared to look at his letters on landing; but to see no black border was a relief, and it was a still greater one to learn that his father had recovered his speech and the use of his limbs, and though partly an invalid, was well enough to be looking forward eagerly to his son's arrival. Except observing that one was from Ella, he took no notice of his other letters till he was in the train speeding on his way to Holyhead. He opened Ella's first, and found one of the charming, cordial, sympathetic letters she knew how to write; it came straight from her heart. She had informed herself of the improvement in Sir Henry's state from the papers, and congratulated him. She touched prettily on his devotion in giving up his congenial appointment

for his father's sake, but took it as a matter of course; in fact the note was exactly right, and Willoughby touched the letter with his lips before he folded it up and put it in his pocket. One or two dull business letters were opened next, and then came one in a strong, small handwriting which he did not know. It was from Nellie Moore, and ran as follows:—

“You have come home in the nick of time. Ella is fretting; her health has been bad ever since you left. The divorce proceedings tried her horribly, and that brute has used every means of frightening and disgusting her. Happily now it is all over, and she is a free woman. You have helped to gain her freedom, and it should be your reward.”

Willoughby was first startled, then furious. In his year's absence Mrs Kenrick and her history had faded into the background. Her charming letters had kept alive his friendship; but any warmer feeling, even if it had ever existed on Willoughby's part, had been easily stifled, and he had quite persuaded himself that a sentimental friendship was all a woman of Ella Kenrick's type needed to make her happy.

This ill-judged interference roused all the Irish perversity in his nature; even her own letter now appeared a conscious abrogation of any claim upon him,—her studied avoidance of

all mention of her own affairs seemed in itself an appeal. Was it possible she might have known of the grey-haired girl's letter? No! that he could not believe.

He went on without stopping to Dublin, and as he paced the deck of the steamer by star-light he faced his position for the first time. Here was this woman, who perhaps loved him, he had paid for her divorce, sympathised with her sufferings, and perhaps encouraged her to think he meant to marry her. Had he ever meant it? The remembrance of their last interview, somewhat blurred, came back to him; what had he meant then? what had he said? He could not quite remember; and now with the thought of his father came to him the views of that staunch old Catholic on the subject of divorce and remarriage. The thing was impossible, even if he had wanted it himself, and he was sure now he did not want it. He was very unwilling to cause any pain to Ella, but the other woman must be made to understand clearly; yet, after all, what business was it of hers? He would tear up her letter and not answer it.

How beautiful the dawn was on the Wicklow Mountains! It softened his thoughts of Ella: he wanted her to be happy, he would always be her friend, always be ready to sympathise and to help her; perhaps he could open a new field for her writings. He would get His Excellency's wife to call on her. There were many things he could do, and, after all, what

right had Miss Moore to suppose Ella loved him? Here he stopped: somehow he did not want to prove that she did *not*, only to convince himself that she wanted nothing in return but esteem and affection.

In the bustle of landing he had to put the whole thing out of his mind, and in the train on the other side he fell asleep after his wakeful night; and then came the painful excitement of meeting his father, and noting his changed condition. From having been a strong, active man, Sir Henry was reduced to the condition of a semi-invalid, his right arm almost useless, and his right leg very uncertain. He had recovered his power of speech, and his mind, though working slowly, seemed quite clear. He was evidently occasionally irritable with the impecunious niece who had been selected to come and look after him; and Dan found later that some ideas took a quite disproportionate hold on his mind, and were incessantly harped upon by him.

He stayed up to dinner on this the first night of Dan's return, and as they sat together over their wine he expressed in a few words his appreciation of Dan's sacrifice in coming home to him.

"I couldn't do without you, Dan," he said, in a tone which almost brought the tears to his son's eyes.

"That's all right, dad," he said; "we have always backed each other up."

"Yes; and now I want a further sacrifice from you," said his father.

Dan started. Was he going to ask him to leave the army?

"I should like to see you married, my boy: I want to see an heir to the old place before I die. I don't wish to dictate your choice: as long as you marry a nice straight girl, and a good Catholic, I shan't care,—it's a personal matter."

"Completely personal," said Dan coldly. His face looked like a mask, but he was deeply annoyed.

"You don't like my meddling," said his father testily; "but, confound it all, it's my affair too; I married to please *my* father."

Dan's face clouded; he remembered his mother, and also the conditions of her married life: his father saw he had made a mistake, and hastened to take up a more genial tone.

"Of course it's not a matter to hurry over," he said; "but this illness has touched me up. I have made my peace with God" (with the help of his confessor and some hundreds of pounds), "and settled up my worldly affairs, and now I want to see my only son provided with a good wife and a bouncing son, and then I shall be ready to go. Only tell me, Dan, that you have no entanglement."

"No, sir," said Dan hastily and stiffly.

"Then I can wait," said the old gentleman, evidently relieved at the promptitude of the reply. If he could have read his son's mind he would have scarcely been so satisfied.

Dan tried to ask himself how the affair of Ella Kenrick

would look to his father: he would regard Dan's whole interference with disgust, his gifts of money for the purposes of obtaining a divorce as immoral, and the conduct of the woman who accepted them as scandalous. To him Mrs Kenrick would be still in fact and by God's law a married woman, and therefore Dan could not be bound by any philandering which had gone on between them: from this point of view there could be no entanglement, but the atmosphere of the whole affair would have been utterly distasteful to him.

Dan concluded hurriedly that the knowledge of Mrs Kenrick's existence must be kept from his father at any cost, and perhaps to appear to entertain this idea of marriage would be as good a way of doing so as any other. After all, he must marry some time, and it was easy to put off the evil day. Marriages were not made in a moment, he could not be hustled to church against his will, but here he could not reckon with the unknown forces arrayed against him.

As he and his father were smoking their afternoon cigarettes on the terrace next day, Sir Henry, who had been speaking of changes in the county, said, "There are some pleasant new neighbours at the Grange, a Mr and Lady Margaret Maitland, with a pretty daughter. The ladies often come and see me; they were very kind when I was ill: as they are very anxious to see you, I should not wonder if they dropped in to tea to-day."

It was a lovely June afternoon; the scent of the myrtle

with which the house was covered filled the air. The park stretched vividly green before them, and between the trees bright patches of opaline sea gleamed and shimmered through the haze. The drive wound in and out between its borders of ilex and laurel, and as Sir Henry spoke Dan saw in one of the bends a small pony-cart spinning along.

"Do they drive a small cart very fast, and have they a hog-maned grey pony and a tan collie?" he asked lazily, "because if so, here they are."

Sir Henry finished his cigarette as the ladies were ushered through the house on to the terrace, and Dan was not at all sorry to meet two pretty women, for pretty women they certainly were and perfectly dressed—the mother, in the way of modern mothers, looking almost as young as her daughter, and quite as attractive.

Sir Henry introduced Dan, and the niece appearing with the tea, the visitors sat down, one on each side of the old gentleman, with whom they were evidently quite at home. Lady Margaret was brimming over with chatter, and full of animation. As she turned her pretty head from one side to the other her well-arched eyebrows said all sorts of clever things: she took off her gloves, and one saw what white hands she had—every gesture was charming. Her daughter, on the contrary, was very still and quiet; there was a sense of mystery about her. She had dusky hair well waved and puffed on each side of her face, which was small

and very white; her eyes were large and pale grey in colour, the iris rimmed with black and the lashes also quite black; her lips were scarlet and haughtily curved, and altogether, though decidedly handsome, Willoughby thought her rather unapproachable. However, when he spoke to her she answered in quite an ordinary way just like any other girl, and they were soon discussing the weather and the neighbourhood, whilst Lady Margaret amused Sir Henry. She presently turned to Dan with inquiries about some mutual acquaintances in New Zealand, and Miss Maitland, after severely snubbing the useful niece, who made some timid advances in her direction, sat quite silent with an inscrutable air, and even when Sir Henry tried to draw her out, replied only in monosyllables with a somewhat scornful lifting of her upper lip. Lady Margaret, who had steadily ignored the useful niece throughout the visit, now found it necessary to cross over to her side, which she did with a pretty flourish of petticoats, and sat down beside her for a few minutes' confidential chat about Sir Henry's health, leaving her when she got up to go in an ecstasy of admiration at Lady Margaret's charming manners. Dan escorted the two ladies to their pony-cart, and was made to promise to come over to lunch the next day, which he was quite willing to do; and as the pony tore off down the drive accompanied by the handsome barking collie, he thought the whole turnout a distinctly agreeable addition to the neighbour-

hood, and said so to his father, who was evidently in love with Lady Margaret and more distantly devoted to her daughter. The niece, however, declared Miss Maitland to be distinctly disagreeable, so satirical for a girl, quite unlike her dear mother : this angered Sir Henry, who said he liked a girl all the better for not being a chatter-box, and thought it would be a good thing if other people knew when to hold their tongues. Dan left them to fight it out, and strolled off to the stables.

It was with pleasure that the next day he walked over to lunch at the Grange. He found Lady Margaret alone in the drawing-room engaged on an elaborate piece of embroidery : she looked very fresh and dainty with her shining hair so carefully dressed ; she was very friendly and pleasant too, spoke so nicely of Sir Henry, and made Dan feel what a welcome addition he himself was to the neighbourhood. Her husband would be in in a minute, and so would Muriel ; she had gone down to the village with some things for the poor people ; she was already on such good terms with old Father O'Flaherty, and he had set her to work ; it was good for a girl's character to go among the poor, didn't he think so ? It was so pleasant to be in a Catholic country where everybody could work together instead of being shut off from your neighbours. Sir Henry was such a good Catholic, —she hoped Major Willoughby was ; and as Dan politely turned the conversation, she glided off

to her husband's fishing and Sir Henry's health.

The luncheon-bell rang and they went in together, but were joined in a minute or two by Mr Maitland, a quiet-mannered gentlemanly man, who seemed glad to see a stranger : still Muriel did not come, and her mother wondered often. When they were half-way through luncheon the young lady walked in, followed by a young man of the neighbourhood, and it transpired she had not been to the village : she had met Mr Moon just outside the gate, and his terrier was such a splendid ratter, so they had gone back and spent a happy morning in the barn.

"Grab killed sixteen rats, father ; Nip was no good at all beside him."

Willoughby felt rather disgusted, though the girl looked so handsome in her rough grey tweed with two heron's feathers in her Tam o' Shanter, that he almost overlooked her callousness.

What had she done with the basket of things for the old women ? asked her mother.

"Oh ! I suppose we left it in the barn, didn't we ?" she replied, turning her handsome grey eyes on Mr Moon, who promised to fetch it after lunch and deliver its contents on his way home.

They went out on the verandah to smoke after Muriel had satisfied an excellent appetite, and she condescended to take a little notice of Willoughby, and proposed, after a while, that he should come and do some putting on the lawn,

which they did, assisted by Mr Moon and the dogs; and Willoughby went home well enough pleased with his day.

This sort of thing went on pleasantly enough in the summer weather; Sir Henry seemed to get better, the county was pleased to see Dan, there were picnics and golf-meetings, races and a ball in the county town. Dan was surprised to see how magnificent Muriel looked in a ballroom. She lost the childish air which short skirts and wind-blown hair sometimes gave her. Her neck and arms gave promise of great beauty; she moved like a queen, and her small dark head was carried high. She was beautifully dressed, which made more difference between her and the other girls than the men knew; but anyhow she was the handsomest girl in the room, and Willoughby had plenty of time for observing her at a distance, for she was surrounded by boys with whom she danced waltz after waltz, Willoughby having to be content with the kitchen lancers. He took Lady Margaret down to supper, and remarked that Miss Muriel seemed to be enjoying herself.

"Muriel is so sensible that one forgets sometimes how young she is," observed Lady Margaret, a remark which made Willoughby smile, as he often did at Lady Margaret's speeches.

"She makes us remember how old we are," said Mr Maitland, who was fretting to get home to bed.

On their way home at day-break, when Mr Maitland was

fast asleep in the carriage, Lady Margaret said softly to her daughter, "I suppose young Moon's step suits yours exactly, Muriel?" It was the only reproach she offered; but Muriel said testily, "Oh, you looked after Major Willoughby, mother; old men like that *must* know they are in the way at a ball."

Lady Margaret suppressed a desire to box her ears, and apparently went to sleep in the corner of the carriage. The next day she wrote a letter to her brother the Duke, in which she dilated on the charms of the Emerald Isle and their excellent fishing, and added that a very agreeable charming man, Major Willoughby, who was their near neighbour, seemed greatly taken with Muriel.

"One cannot help being anxious about the dear child's future, knowing her father as you and I know him, Teddie dear, and how I am left to arrange everything, and I should be so glad of your advice and opinion if you could possibly run over, dear old boy; there is rather a good county race meeting next week."

The Duke was very fond of his sister and of his niece, and having nothing very particular on just then, he wired to say he was coming, and Muriel met him at the station. Willoughby was asked to dinner, and the Duke's charming manners produced just the desired effect upon him. Muriel was at her best, she was really fond of her uncle, and Willoughby went

home convinced that they were a most charming family, with whom it would be a pleasure to be connected; and when Sir Henry went off on his usual theme Dan was less impatient than usual.

They all went to the races together: the whole county was delighted to see Dan, but the Duke, a complete stranger in those parts, would have been quite out of it without Willoughby's introduction to the other magnates. The Maitlands had never been so far afield, and only knew their immediate neighbours, and Willoughby was well pleased to make things pleasant for them. Muriel had never been so responsive before. She confided to her mother her surprise at the consideration in which Major Willoughby was held.

"What a thing cleverness is, mother!" she said; "every one seemed to think so much of Major Willoughby because he had done something. Uncle Teddie seemed nowhere."

The Maitlands drove home, but Willoughby was asked to dine and sleep at the big house in the neighbourhood. From every one he heard praise of his new friends and admiration of the girl's looks and her mother's charm. He stayed two nights, so did not again see the Duke, who was leaving next day; but having told his man to meet him with a cart for his luggage, he himself turned off through the woods to call at the Maitlands' before going home.

It was a golden afternoon,

and he fell a-dreaming as he walked; the woods were full of the scent of honeysuckle, and somehow it seemed to him that close behind him was a vague dim figure with her hands full of flowers, and again the south wind blew, and somewhere were white-robed nymphs who joined hands whilst all nature went a-wooing. But the voice that murmured to him was a sweet husky contralto, very unlike Muriel's high-pitched young treble, and the hand which stole into his was long and thin and wore a turquoise ring too large for it. He scarcely woke from his dream as he came within sight of the sea, and walked up to the Grange with a strange feeling of glamour still upon him. Muriel seemed part of it as she sat on an old stone bench on the terrace against a background of purple clematis, and he, taking his fate in his hands, went up to her.

She turned her head lazily as he came, and he was again aware of that air of mystery he sometimes perceived in her, and of an atmosphere of passion which seemed unconsciously to emanate from her. He looked into her eyes and held her hand till she snatched it away from him, making some commonplace remark which he did not hear, and instead of answering he said, "Miss Muriel, I want to speak to you on a subject of great importance to us both—can you guess what it is?"

"I hate guessing," she said.

"I want you to be my wife," he went on; "you are very young, but you are old enough to know what that means. Do

you think I could make you happy?"

"Mother thinks so," said Muriel.

"I want to hear what you say, not what your mother thinks."

She was very grave, but this time she let him keep her hand and looked shyly up at him.

"I suppose it's all right, you must ask mother," she said; and then, surprised by her young beauty, and by something in her eyes which was not translated into her speech, he bent over her and kissed her on the lips. She flushed rose-red, but did not seem displeased, and at that minute Lady Margaret appeared stepping through a window. Muriel stood up, and Willoughby led her towards her mother, saying, "Lady Margaret, I am to ask you what Muriel thinks."

"I think she is a very lucky girl," said the lady, at which Muriel again snatched away her hand, and turning, ran into the house.

"She has not said No," said Dan; "you must find out for me what she really means. I will come back after dinner to hear."

After dinner he and Muriel were left alone together in the drawing-room, and he asked again for her answer.

"It is Yes," said Muriel with her usual directness, but she seemed somehow frozen and stiffened since the afternoon.

"Are you sure you are not being persuaded or cajoled into this, child?" he asked with a sudden dread.

"No fear; no one can per-

suade me if I don't choose," she answered, with her somewhat shrill laugh. "I think I shall like being Mrs Willoughby."

"Wasn't it a mercy I didn't say *Lady Willoughby*?" she remarked afterwards to her mother; "it was on the tip of my tongue."

Sir Henry was delighted, of course, and though Dan was somewhat bored by the preparations for the wedding, he found his *fiancé* interesting from her alternations of reserve and childlike outspokenness; and if she showed herself anxious at times to escape from his society to that of boys and dogs, there was always Lady Margaret at hand to talk charmingly to him, or Mr Maitland, who proved to have a fund of quiet humour which was never obtrusive. He found, however, a curious difficulty in announcing the fact of his approaching marriage to Mrs Kenrick, and it was only two days before the wedding that he made up his mind to sit down and write to her. He dwelt much on his father's desire to see him married, his anxiety for a grandson to ensure the direct descent of the property and the name, and especially on Sir Henry's intense feeling for the old faith, and his own desire to make the old man's last years happy. He tried to leave the impression, without actually putting it into words, that he was sacrificing himself, as he believed, to this desire, but he was obliged to own the letter was not a success. It left him with an uneasy feeling that he cut but a poor figure. On his

wedding morning he got her answer :—

“Good-bye; my poor heart has been so battered and bruised that I did not think it had room for a new ache, but the pain of rooting up our friendship swallows up all the others. Go your way prosperous and happy, with your father’s blessing and the consciousness of duty done and your position assured! But let one thought of me shadow your happiness, one note be out of tune in your marriage-bells; be sorry for me whilst you read this, and then forget me.

“ELLA.”

It was not a pleasant letter to take to church with one, but it lay over his heart when he stood before the altar.

The Willoughbys went to Paris for their honeymoon; Muriel wanted to buy things, as Rathmore had not supplied many ideas for her trousseau. She did a good deal of shopping with her French maid. They went to some theatres, Willoughby being a little embarrassed by her intimate acquaintance with the French language, and he tried, quite unsuccessfully, to interest her in the pictures in the Louvre. They were to go on to Lucerne after the first week.

One morning when they came down to breakfast, which they took in their own sitting-room in the hotel, Willoughby saw on the top of his pile of letters one in a small clear handwriting which he knew as that of Nellie Moore. His heart gave

a great thump,—he thought Mrs Kenrick must be ill. He opened the letter, and his blood mounted angrily to his face as he read.

“You are a traitor!” it ran, “and I do not care what means I take of publishing the fact; I will punish treachery with treachery. I am writing to your wife, to your father, to your mother-in-law, and to your old chief; they shall all know how you have led a woman on to hope and have broken her heart. They shall hear how you encouraged Ella to leave her husband, how you gave her money for that and for her divorce, which she would never have accepted but for the understanding that you loved her and were prepared to marry her, and how, when she was left with all her domestic woes and misery exposed to the world, you coldly abandoned her without a word, and only warned her of your marriage the day before it took place.

“How do you like the look of your conduct, now it is put plainly before you? No doubt you are sheltering yourself behind the plea of giving satisfaction to your father, but I suppose your father is a gentleman, and would hardly have demanded from you the sacrifice of a woman’s life and happiness, even though she is not a Catholic? Well, he will know all about it by the time this reaches you, and so will all your friends whom I know how to reach. Your career may, after all, not be so prosperous as you expect,—at least there

shall be some bitter moments in it, if I can compass them.

“NELLIE MOORE.”

His rage had turned from red to white by the time he had finished reading, and he raised his eyes from the letter to his wife's face as she sat opposite. She had helped herself to an egg, and was calmly eating her breakfast before opening her letters. The action was characteristic.

All through that miserable meal Willoughby tried to imagine what she would say and how she would take it. He pretended to read the paper whilst she opened her letters; there were three, and she read them all through and then quietly got up and left the room without a word. After a few minutes Dan, unable to bear the suspense, followed her to her bedroom. To his surprise he found her with her maid, putting her hat on before the glass.

“Where are you going?” he asked.

“To Madame Laforge,” she answered, quite naturally; “I have an appointment with her for 11.30 to try on a dress. I shall be back in two hours, and then we can go to the Bois.”

Left alone, Willoughby tried in vain to understand her. It was impossible for him to realise that her mind was so entirely taken up with her new dress that she had hardly taken in the accusation against her husband. Other people's affairs were so unimportant to her; anyhow, she would ask mamma

about it; it was no use making a fuss.

Before she came back a telegram was handed to Willoughby from Lady Margaret.

“Your father has had another stroke, very ill, come at once.”

The first-fruits of the grey-haired girl's sowing, thought Willoughby in his anguish. He was as handy as a woman in some things; all his own and most of Muriel's things were packed before she got back; she stood astonished, and when Dan told her the news, was highly indignant.

“Of course I am very sorry, Dan; but I cannot tell what mother could be thinking of to telegraph like that: she must know it is impossible for me to do the long journey twice over, I was so tired, and my clothes are not half-finished. Couldn't you leave me here with Marcel, and pick me up again when we go on to Switzerland?”

“Certainly not,” said Dan in a voice she had never heard before, and at which she at once collapsed. She sat down and began to cry; he softened at that, and explained to her how doubtful it was if they would find his father alive, and how necessary it was for him to be on the spot, and how sorry he was to spoil her pleasure. He spoke as if he was reasoning with a child, and she accepted his explanations with a very bad grace; but they got off by the next train, and all through the long journey he cared for her very tenderly, and it was only when she was sleeping

on board the steamer as they crossed to Ireland that he gave himself time to think as he paced the deck. It seemed to him the comfortable fabric of his life lay shattered around him. His father was dying—perhaps dead—without one word of comprehension between them, with a false impression after all these years of sympathy and affection. His wife was utterly unsympathetic, and perhaps alienated from him for ever; he had sacrificed his happiness (so he told himself) at the call of duty, and his sacrifice was of no avail. But stop: was he so sure of his own disinterestedness? was it all for his father's sake he had done this thing? was there no gratified vanity in the bargain, no desire to win a handsome young wife, to be connected with a distinguished family, no hidden thought at the back of all of freeing himself from a lurking temptation? He knew a marriage with Ella was an impossibility in his father's eyes; and in those of all his belongings it would have been no marriage at all. Why, then, had he not honestly told her so? Why had he shirked seeing her when he came home? Why might he not have kept himself unmarried for her sake and given her the comfort of a true and sustaining friendship? Here in the starlight, with the sea depths and sky depths around him, and with the thought of death so near, this did not seem impossible, and for a moment he saw his naked soul and was ashamed.

At last the long journey was

at an end. Muriel scarcely spoke, Willoughby was sick with anxiety. Lady Margaret and Mr Maitland met them at Rathmore.

"He is still alive," said she in answer to his unspoken question, "but he has never recovered consciousness. The carriage is here; you will drive up at once."

"Mother, I am so tired," said Muriel's plaintive voice, "I shall be no good up there; mayn't I go home with you?"

"Yes, yes," said Dan, "that will be best; it is very trying for her," in answer to Lady Margaret's quick glance at him. "I will come down to you later."

Mr Maitland offered to go with him to Rathmore House, but Dan said he would rather go alone. On the steps of his home he was met by Father O'Flaherty, and the familiar kindly presence was a comfort to him.

"Will he know me?" he asked.

"He knows nothing," said the priest; "God grant there may be a gleam of light before the end." He led Dan to his father's bedside, and as Dan looked at the drawn inert face and form propped up on pillows, from which they seemed ready to slip away, he realised the full force of his sorrow, he broke down and sobbed bitterly. Father O'Flaherty knelt by the bedside in silent prayer, and after a while led him away to wash and eat, for he would need all his strength, as this state might last for days.

When he came back to the

good priest, he asked him what had been the immediate cause of the seizure.

"Your father had been restless and excited ever since the wedding—over-tired probably. The stroke came on in the morning in his bed; when found a few minutes later, he had an open letter in his hand. I have not read it, my son; here it is, but," as Dan seemed inclined to put the letter in his pocket without speaking, "Lady Margaret has told me of its probable contents and consulted me upon them; I have counselled her to hear you before allowing herself to be influenced by a malicious attack."

"Thank you, Father," said Dan, wringing the priest's hand; "I will go to my mother-in-law if you can watch here, and I will come back and take your place for the night."

It seemed to Dan of the first importance to get this interview with Lady Margaret over.

"How is Muriel?" he asked.

"The poor child is asleep, worn out." This was one of Lady Margaret's fictions; Muriel had made a good meal and gone comfortably to bed. "You must not be hard upon her, Dan, she is new to all kind of emotions."

"Hard upon her, poor child! I am only sorry to be turning out such an unsatisfactory husband. I must speak to you at once of these horrible letters."

"Yes; I thought perhaps Mr Maitland had better talk to you about that; but if you like to assure me it is all broken off, I don't want to go into details."

Willoughby smiled somewhat

grimly. "My dear Lady Margaret, you are under a misapprehension, there was nothing of that sort to break off. It is as well to speak plainly: the lady in question was the victim of a most unfortunate marriage, I helped her as a friend to free herself from a brutal husband; if she, or her friend, misunderstood my motives, it is distressing——"

"Good gracious!" said Lady Margaret, becoming suddenly natural, "do you mean to say you never made love to her?"

"Never!" said Willoughby emphatically.

"But the divorce?" she queried.

"She divorced *him* for carrying on an intrigue with her maid under her own roof."

"My dear boy! a piece of pure quixotism on your part!" Dan winced a little. "What a relief! That girl should be hanged! a real bit of spite. If only poor Sir Henry could know. Did the lady know of the letters?"

"Certainly not," said Dan indignantly; then gently, "You will explain to Muriel."

"Of course, of course." Lady Margaret was anxious to get him safely off before Mr Maitland came in. She would rather manage the explanation herself.

"You will not resume your friendship with the lady?"

"This has made it impossible," said Dan; but as he walked home to his miserable vigil he felt no exaltation at the satisfactory result of his interview. It seemed a pale, reproachful, yet beloved shade went with him, which refused

to be laid. *Did* Ella know of the letters? It was the one idea which tormented him more than all the others: at one moment he indignantly repudiated it; at another it returned and insinuated its ugly snaky form into his inmost thoughts. All night long, as he sat with brooding Death beside his unconscious father, he revolved it in his mind, and when at day-break he fell into an uneasy sleep it haunted his dreams and met him when he woke. Would he never get away from this woman? Even the presence of death could not rid him of her.

For three days Sir Henry lingered restless, knowing nothing and no one; then without a gleam of consciousness came the end. But Dan knew in some mysterious way that his love had reached his father's soul, and that in spite of death they understood each other through love. The old man's face was calm and beautiful as he lay dead. Muriel brought a wreath of lilies, but she did not come into the house, and Dan found it difficult to realise the episode of his marriage, as he sat a while with her on the terrace where he had first seen her.

"You will come to us after the funeral?" she asked.

"Will not you come here to your home?" he said; but when she shrinkingly implored, "not yet," he had no heart to insist.

The offer of a good appointment at the Intelligence Department came to help him out of a difficulty. Muriel liked the idea of London; and when it was discovered that

Mr Maitland wanted to go to South Africa for the winter, and that Lady Margaret could not stand a sea voyage, it seemed natural and agreeable that she should share a house with the newly married couple for the winter months. A house was taken in Chester Street, and Willoughby found himself taking life much as he had done before his world had suddenly swung round into darkness, carrying him with it. Day had come again—rather a garish commonplace noontide, no glad confident morning nor scented moon-haunted twilight, but a good working, comfortable daylight, with regular meal-times and no surprises. Muriel was not exacting or ill-tempered, and she grew handsomer every day. Lady Margaret saw to his comforts and helped things more than he knew; altogether, as usual, things went well with him; his work was interesting, and he knew he did it excellently; they dined out and entertained people at home; he wrote successfully in one or two good magazines; the world was once more solid under his feet.

The Duke was in London, and they were a great deal at Exeter House, also they went down to Dumbleton for the shooting. Willoughby could not account to himself for the weariness that oppressed him.

One murky November evening, as he turned into St James's Park on his way home from his office, he was stopped by a woman who stepped in front of him,—it was the grey-haired girl.

"I must speak to you," she said decidedly. "Ella has had congestion of the lungs—she is still very ill; the doctor says she must go abroad, out of all this," with a wave of her hand. "We have no money, I have been nursing her and had no time to make any; her husband never paid a penny of her allowance,—he is in India and we can't get at him: I am obliged to come to you."

"And you have the face?" said Willoughby.

"Not for myself," she said.

"Why does not Mrs Kenrick ask me? I might listen to her, but never to you."

"She will never ask you," said Nellie with a sneer, "so it is easy to get out of it that way."

"Then how do you propose to account to her for the money, supposing you get it?" he asked.

"I have some unsaleable pictures on hand, I thought you might buy them; they would do to hang in your wife's boudoir."

Dan controlled himself with difficulty. "How do I know you are not trying to get money out of me on false pretences? I might give you in charge to the next policeman." He was watching her narrowly; she made an indifferent gesture, sweeping this nonsense aside.

"You have given Ella her deathblow," she replied; "surely you cannot grudge some of your superfluity to make her few last months more easy. If we could get to Italy she might enjoy a little respite, and I might be able to do a bit of painting."

A certain wistfulness in her tone gave him for a minute a glimpse of this woman's life, also wrecked and frustrated; but it did not soften him. On the contrary, it irritated him, and he broke out angrily, "You hell-cat! your letter killed my father, and now you come to me whining about your painting."

"We seem to be a nice pair of murderers," she said with a bitter laugh; "hadn't we better try and cheat the devil by lessening the sufferings of one of our victims?"

"You can send the pictures to Clifford's, and he shall send you a cheque for them."

"You do not want your left hand with the wedding ring on to know what your right hand does;" she could not resist the gibe. "It must be at once," she added, as he turned away and left her with no formality of leave-taking. He walked straight to Clifford's and arranged for the purchase of the pictures, which he desired him to keep and to sell again if possible for the benefit of the artist. As he walked away, again the thought tormented him. Did Ella know? Was it all a plan got up between the friends? He would go and see her and find out; he had not even asked for their address, he would get it from Clifford: he did, and went. They were gone.

Then again the grey monotony of life, each successful day so like the others. Christmas and the New Year past, and then one day a letter with a foreign stamp was waiting for

him at the office: the handwriting made him wince, he opened it quickly.

"Ella is dead," it ran; "I buried her to-day on a sunny slope overlooking the sea at Nervi. For me life holds nothing more worth having; for you, your prosperous career will go on untroubled, yet you she loved, me she only tolerated. I bored her terribly at times, especially at the last."

That was all. Ella was dead, and he would never know; after all, did it matter so very much? And then he knew suddenly and beyond doubt that it mattered horribly. He had loved her, she was the one thing on earth he really desired, and he had sacrificed her—for what? Why had he given his money for that which was not bread, and his life for that which profited not? What did it all signify? Ella was dead! He got through the business of the day somehow, and made his way home to his own study. Muriel was out; Lady Margaret had left to rejoin her husband. He locked the door and sat on alone through all the hours of the evening; he was sitting there still when Muriel came home from the play; he sent her away to bed, saying he was very busy, and still he sat on through the long hours of the night, and when at last he rose, stiff and cold, to fling himself wearily on the bed in his dressing-room, no other idea seemed clear to him than that Ella was dead. He felt as if he had had a violent blow on the head which had numbed his brain, and next day, whilst he ate and talked

and worked as usual, the one thought at the back of his mind was that he must somehow get away and see her grave. He felt that if he sat there beside her he could ask her pardon for ever having thought she might have known about the letters or the money. He should feel sure then. He fought the idea down somehow; but the struggle left him dull and preoccupied, and every one said how ill he was looking.

Muriel took to going out a great deal without him, as he was so hard at work; and if he ever came home earlier than usual, he found the drawing-room full of young men whose conversation flagged when he appeared, and who left if they found they could not outstay him. One evening he came home particularly done up and found Muriel, beautifully dressed, just going out. She said she was going to dine with Mrs Murray (Captain Murray was one of his subs at the Intelligence Department) at the Berkeley with two men, and going to the theatre afterwards.

"Give it up, dear," he said, "and stay at home with me. I want cheering up."

"If you had said so sooner, dear old boy, of course I'd have chucked it; but there is no dinner," she said. "I forgot to order it; I thought you would go to the club."

"I think I had better come with you," he replied, looking hard at her.

"There's no ticket for you, and you would spoil the fun," she said imperturbably as she stepped into her little brougham.

The next morning Willoughby got a welcome communication. A frontier war had broken out in India, and the general in command wanted him as chief of his staff. It seemed that a door had suddenly opened for him leading out of his dull oppressive life into a world of action, of hardship, of glory,—the world where men forget themselves and others: perhaps he would now get rid of the pale vision that ever walked and sat down beside him—

“This haunting woman,”

“All pervading, superhuman.”

He thought little of Muriel, he would make arrangements for her comfort, and he telegraphed to Lady Margaret as soon as he had written accepting the appointment.

He got home early and found Muriel, for a wonder, alone, and rather subdued: perhaps the episode of last night, which he had quite forgotten, was somewhat on her mind. He told her at once gravely and kindly what had happened, and that he should have to start in a few days, and that he had telegraphed to her mother. To his surprise her grey eyes blazed, and she broke out—

“What did you do that for? why am I never consulted? Am I always to be treated as a child, first handed over to you and then back again to mamma, without a word as to my own wishes? I had enough of mamma last winter; you and she enjoyed yourselves, and talked dull stuff over my head; she chose my servants and ordered my dinners, and found

fault with my friends, and since she left have you ever thought once of my happiness or done anything for my pleasure? Work, work; your own ambition and your own career are the only things you have ever cared for, except perhaps that woman who died. Oh yes! I know all about her. I have been driven to find other people to go about with and to amuse me; but perhaps if you had ever taken the trouble to explain things to me or to find out what I thought about them, you might not have found me so stupid after all!”

Once again Willoughby was brought face to face with himself, and he looked into the eyes of the apparition and was afraid. Here was another woman's life that had been given into his hands, and he had stifled it: it was as if he had caught a bird just taking flight into the sunshine and shut it up in a box. What if the bird's note had been somewhat dull and disappointing? It had a right to its own little flutter of life in the light and air; he had no right to crush it. His voice was very gentle and rather unsteady when he spoke.

“My dear,” he said, “it is so difficult to understand. We live side by side for years, and one moment shows us what all that time has hidden. Forgive me, dear: if I come back, we will begin all over again; if not, you are still young and can yet live your life.” But still he had not reached her. Muriel was, as usual, obstinately set on her own idea; her soul, which seemed to have looked out for

a moment, had gone in again and shut the door; she only said, "I wish you had not sent for mamma."

Willoughby had reason to thank his stars during the next day or two that he had. Lady Margaret saw to everything, arranged everything for the best, in the best way, was eagerly interested, and kept everything cheerfully on the surface. Their house at Eastbourne was too cold for the winter, it would let very well; Mr Maitland wanted to see a doctor, they would come and share Muriel's housekeeping; and then after Easter, if Dan was not back—of course he would be—but if *not*, they might go to Eastbourne together. Here Muriel went out and banged the door.

"Dear child," said Lady Margaret, "she does not like to hear of your not being back *soon*." Dan looked at her with admiration as she went on knitting him a Tam o' Shanter.

They saw him off from Charing Cross for Brindisi; there were no tears, and Dan felt he was going through the Ivory Gate and into the Land of Dreams which is called the East, and leaving all the workaday world behind him.

He wrote capital letters about his arrival, his journey up country and the people he met. The campaign seemed rather uninteresting to those at home; as Muriel wrote, the places had such outlandish names no one *could* remember them, the pictures in the 'Graphic' were all exactly alike, and she did not

see why they never got any "forrarder." The blacks always seemed to have the best of it; our people were always climbing up hills and coming down again,—she thought they really *must* want a little fighting.

Then one day came a telegram from the War Office; Lady Margaret opened it and sent for her husband. What did it mean? She sat staring at the words—

"Colonel Willoughby in command of a detachment unfortunately surrounded by the enemy—gallant fight—all killed except a few men who managed to cut their way back to camp."

How had it happened? Nobody could make out. There were no correspondents to tell how bravely Willoughby and a few others fought with their backs to the hillside, and the commander-in-chief, who loved him, kept silence on the fact that without orders Willoughby had tried to do an impossible thing, which would have been useless even if possible. Had he not paid the forfeit? So the papers were full of his deeds, his portrait was everywhere, Willoughby's career closed as successfully as it had run, and Lady Willoughby had the sympathy of all England and apartments at Hampton Court.

What Willoughby thought of it all, as he fought that last fight, no one can know: perhaps the fierce joy of battle hid all else, or perhaps a sweet form, no longer dim or tragic, held out hands full of amaranth to crown him at the last.

A GENTLEMAN OF SCOTLAND.

BY ANDREW LANG.

THE writing of history, like other misfortune, makes a man acquainted with strange companions. You do not meet them, or at least only in a passing mention, on the broad highways of Macaulay, Froude, Tytler, Hill Burton, and other classical authorities. They dwell obscurely in the manuscripts of their age, and are concealed by the crowd of more brilliant and famous puppets, of whom, perhaps, they pulled the strings. I have encountered some very unfortunate Highland gentlemen, a few of them so remarkable that I have not deemed it right (or even safe) to reveal their calamitous careers. But far more unlucky than all of these was the Rev. Mr Archibald Douglas, a Lord of Session, one of the Fifteen, and ambassador from James VI. to the Court of St James's. You hear of him, in regular books of history, as "the notorious Archibald Douglas," but next to nothing is said of his adventures in Sir William Fraser's 'Book of Douglas.' In 'The Historical Account of the Senators of the College of Justice' Mr Archibald has his niche, but the information is meagre. There are great gaps in my own knowledge of my subterranean hero, yet what I know I shall tell.

Archibald is the finest example of a type of character

produced by an age of religious Reformation. Long before Knox came, the nobles of Scotland had been robbing and ruining the Church, and thrusting scoundrelly and unscrupulous younger sons into benefices—men murderous, adulterous, and corrupt. During and after the Reformation they pursued the same policy, despite the remonstrances of the sincere Protestants. Verily "Patronage" was an abuse when Mr Archibald was "intruded" on one parish after another. Though men like Morton, and Lethington, and Ruthven talked in the language of the godly, their morals were not even veneered with the austere ethics of the Kirk. Scotland, as regards the noble class, was like revolutionary Coreyra in Thucydides. Friendship, the Greek says, did not exist, there was only "partnership in lawless enterprise," partnership false and fickle, each man buying and selling king, queen, and comrade. Of these dealers Mr Archibald was the pattern. He was a "struggle-for-lifer." His father was William Douglas of Whittingham, a son of John, second Earl of Morton. Whittingham had been a possession of the Douglas family since 1260 at least. Remains of the old castle still exist, with the Douglas arms, not far from Mr

A. J. Balfour's modern mansion, and an old tree is pointed out as that under which Bothwell, Morton, and Lethington discussed the murder of Darnley, about January 18, 1567. This ancient yew makes an impenetrable bower, a good place for plotters. Mr Froude writes of the scene as "the yard of the hostelry at Whittingham," an oddly public place for such a conversation. "Yard," in Scots, meant "garden," and the garden of the Laird of Whittingham, not the yard of the hostelry, was the spot: cold enough in January.

The date of Archibald's birth is unknown. I first meet him in 1560, when he, with the famous Maitland of Lethington, witnesses a bond of "manrent," or alliance, between the Earl of Morton, later the Regent, and the Duke of Châtellerauld, the chief of the Hamiltons. Morton, who had wavered as to joining the Protestant rebels against Mary of Guise, had now come over to them, as they were backed by England. How well he kept his oath to the Hamiltons, whose ruin he accomplished for a while, everybody knows.

Morton was, for the hour, the head of the Douglasses, young Archibald was his kinsman and chief. To him the young struggle-for-lifer looked for promotion. Archibald had probably been educated for the priesthood, and, from his frequent dealings in France, I presume that he may have been trained in that country. In 1560 he cannot have been under

twenty-one; he was still a young man at the time of Riccio's murder (1566). Before November 1565 he had obtained the benefice or parsonage of Douglas—to that extent he had robbed the Kirk, whose worthy ministers were sometimes driven by poverty to keep public-houses, while Kirk property was wasted by younger sons swaggering as lay abbots, priors, and parsons. In November 1565, while Morton was Chancellor, Archibald was made an Extraordinary Lord of Session. But in February 1566 Morton had lost, or was in danger of losing, the Seals, his loyalty being more than suspected. Riccio was blamed for this disgrace, and the Douglasses, with their connections, such as Ruthven, determined to "cut at the root," as Lethington said, to murder Riccio; to give Mary a chance of dying, for she was pregnant, and the deed was to be done in her presence: to depose her in any case, to acknowledge Darnley as king, and to recall the queen's exiled brother, the Earl of Moray, and other rebels. This was really a Douglas tragedy: the clay-cold corpse of the inveterate Douglas treason rose and walked for an hour of blood.

The plan was mentioned by Lethington in a letter, two or three days before February 10, 1566, when Darnley sent George Douglas, a bastard, a church-robber, and later a bishop, to deal with Ruthven for the sating of his private grudge against Riccio. Possibly the jealousy of Darnley may have

been inflamed by the Douglasses, who thus induced him to make the first open move in the plot. When the ghastly deed was done, and when Mary—thanks to Bothwell and her own courage and astuteness—had escaped from Holyrood, gathered a force, and driven Morton, Ruthven, and the Douglas gang into exile, the shining qualities of Archibald were used for his party. He had done his share of the daggering: now he turns diplomatist. Sixteen years later, when he was an exile, and Mary a captive, he described to her his doings. He says that he was at once sent by the banished Morton and the rest to France “to humbly pray” (Archie split his infinitives) “your brother, the Most Christian King, to intercede that our offences might be pardoned, and your Majesty’s [Mary’s] clemency extended towards us, albeit divers of no small reputation in that realm was of the opinion that the said fact merited neither to be requisite for, nor yet pardoned.” A very correct opinion. His was a letter which needed tactful handling; as Archibald had to pretend to think Mary ignorant of many things. Archibald, in 1566, was so clever a diplomatist that he persuaded Charles IX. to send Mauvissière to Scotland, after the birth of James VI., to entreat for the pardon of Morton and his Douglasses. He himself was allowed to return to Scotland, to deal with Moray, Atholl, Argyll, Bothwell, and

Lethington, in favour of the exiles. Moray, of course, regarded Morton as one of “the brethren”; both men were godly. Lethington had just been pardoned and restored to favour, Mary siding with Moray on this question, as against Bothwell and Darnley (September 1566). The ruling nobles, Moray and the rest, now told Archibald that before they could entreat for the return of Morton, Lindsay, and Ruthven, these gentlemen must sign a “band” or engagement against Darnley. It is not said by Archibald to have implied murder, but mere refusal to have anything whatsoever to do with “your husband’s command.” This band was signed by Moray about October 4, 1566: he admits signing a band at that date. Archibald returned to Morton, at Newcastle, with the anti-Darnley band, which Morton, of course, signed readily, as Darnley had betrayed him and his allies. Then in November 1566 occurred the famous conference at Craigmillar. Moray, Lethington, Bothwell, and the rest, to induce Mary to pardon Bothwell, offered to her to get rid of Darnley. Lethington said that Parliament would approve, and the plan probably was to arrest him, and slay him if he resisted. Mary either declined or postponed the arrangement.

With Morton’s signature to the band, Archibald returned from Newcastle to Scotland, and went to Stirling during the triumphs for the baptism of James VI. (December 1566).

Pressed by the ambassadors of England and of France, and by her own Lords, now secure of Morton, Mary pardoned him and his accomplices, including Archibald, on Christmas Eve. Darnley at the same moment rode to his father, Lennox, at Glasgow, and later fell ill of smallpox.

Morton, though pardoned, was not, of course, welcomed at Court. Our young struggle-for-lifer, therefore, as Morton himself said in his dying confession, "at that time was a depender upon the Earl Bothwell, making court for himself, rather than a depender of mine." About January 18, 1567, Morton came from Wedderburn to the house of his cousin, Douglas of Whittingham, brother of our Archibald. There Bothwell and Lethington met Morton, and told him that Mary desired Darnley's death. Would he take a hand? He refused, and Archibald again pressed him to join. He replied as before, but, in another interview, promised Bothwell his aid if he got Mary's warrant in writing. This was like Morton: Calderwood tells us that he alone had Mary's written consent to the signing of "Ainslie's band" (April 19, 1567), which urged her to marry Bothwell. Archibald now rode back to Holyrood with Bothwell and Lethington. He takes God to witness that he knew nothing of their business. They entered

the palace and returned, saying only, "Show to the Earl of Morton that the queen will hear no speech of that matter appointed unto him." Lethington added that Morton would understand. Archibald assured Mary that *he* did not understand—the innocent! But Morton confessed that Archibald came to him at St Andrews later (February 1567), with Bothwell's request, which he again refused.¹ However, Archibald, to Mary, insists on his own innocence. At the time he wrote to her (April 1582 or 1583) he was an exile in England, and desired to enter her service. She would not admit him unless he protested his innocence of Darnley's murder, so he protested. On the fatal night of February 9-10, 1567, Archibald, accompanied by his servant, Thomas Binning, was at the murder of Kirk-o'-Field. Whoever reads the confessions of Powrie, Bothwell's porter, and the other criminals, taken in June-December 1567, will observe that they only name nine persons as engaged. But two or three others appear, men with "muffled faces," and with "mulis"—embroidered velvet evening shoes—on their feet. It was the night of a masque and dance at Holyrood for Bastian's marriage, and the men may have come straight to the deed of blood in their silken cloaks, and in their dancing-shoes of embroidered velvet;

¹ Recently discovered MS. evidence, burked by Moray, makes it pretty certain that, though Morton did not sign the band, he did send Archibald and Binning to represent him at the murder of Darnley.

which perhaps they wore to soften the sound of their footsteps. Eleven was the number deposed to by two women, examined on the following day, who saw the murderers run down Blackfriars Wynd after the explosion. Of the two unaccounted for in the confessions, Archibald may have been one, Huntly the other. Long afterwards, in 1581, Archibald's servant, Binning, under torture, told that his master "tint ane of his mulis" at the deed—lost one of his embroidered velvet shoon. He wore secret armour under his cloak: "his clothes were full of clay and foulness."

What Archibald did at Kirk-o'-Field is unknown. Was he one of those whom Darnley, while he struggled with his stranglers, addressed as "kinsmen," praying for pity "in the name of Him who took pity on the world"? Darnley was of kin to the Douglasses. Or did Archibald merely survey the preparations with the gunpowder? We know not: we only know that, by Morton's confession (June 1581), "Mr Archibald, after the deed was done, showed to me that he was at the deed doing, and came to the Kirk-o'-Field garden with the Earls Bothwell and Huntly." Why did Morton, who implicated no others living, thus confess the crime of his kinsman and ally? To that question we may later find a possible answer.

On the morning after the slaying Binning found Archibald in bed, "reading on a

book," and went with him to the Tolbooth, where an inquiry into the murder was being held.

I now lose Archibald for some months. Bothwell fell; Mary was imprisoned at Lochleven. Our friend, of course, now returned to Morton's service. On June 19, 1567, he was one of the Douglasses whom Morton sent to arrest Dalgleish, Bothwell's chamber-child, who had stolen into Edinburgh Castle to carry off some of his master's property. They caught Dalgleish; he gave up the famous silver Casket, and on June 21 Archibald was present when, for lack of a key, the lid of the coffer was "stricken up." The letters were then inspected. Archibald's services were rewarded with the forfeiture of the Laird of Corstorphine, a partisan of Mary. On June 2, 1568, Archibald was appointed an Ordinary Lord of Session, in the place of Mary's friend, Lesley, Bishop of Ross. The Kirk objected to clerical judges. The Rev. Mr Pont was, I think, the last of the judges who was a preacher. There were other murderers and a probable pander on the Bench.

Yet Archibald appears to have been discontented. I find him flitting from England across the Border in April 1569, and remarkably well acquainted with the affairs of the captive Mary. After autumn 1569, there were chances of changed times. Kirkcaldy and Lethington were practically holding Edinburgh Castle for Mary; her party was waxing strong;

her opponents had but doubtful aid from Elizabeth; the coming Regent, Lennox, was not on the best terms with Morton. In April 1570 Archibald was Morton's trusted messenger to Sussex, who was about to punish Mary's adherents by a ruinous invasion. Lennox was being desired as Regent; in June, Archibald was Morton's go-between with the English. Archibald was in English pay; he received £100 as a spy of Drury, commanding the English garrison in Berwick, to the disgust of an honourable English peer. He was also betraying Morton, his chief and benefactor, when Regent, and he was aiding Lethington and Kirkcaldy of Grange in the besieged castle.

His biographers have been unable to account for Archibald's conduct in secretly acting as agent for Lethington and Mary's party while he was a trusted retainer of Morton; but I think there are explanations. First, Mary's party might be successful, and in that case Archibald was likely to swing for his offences. He therefore, as Lethington had done when Mary was in Lochleven, kept open a door of repentance. But "we may conjecture" (as writers on anthropology say thrice to the page) that Archibald had grave reasons for discontent.

The archbishopric of St Andrews was vacant in 1571. A Douglas was certain to get the primacy. All that Morton wanted was a Douglas who, as "tulchan bishop," would hand

over the revenues of the see to himself. But he chose old Mr John Douglas, and Archibald felt that he was overlooked. Morton knew that Archie would be a bad tulchan,—he would stick to the money. He put Archibald off with a very good benefice, as we shall see, but that was not enough; our hero wanted to be an archbishop. Hence his discontent and his treachery to Morton. In August 1571 he had got the rich benefice of Glasgow, just when John Douglas got the mitre, and at Stirling was "commanded to prepare himself for the same by the Kirk." There was an examination to be passed. The Rev. Walter Gourlay was sent to Archibald, and found him "playing at the tables" (backgammon probably) and rattling the devil's bones with the Laird of Bargany. "Ye may see I am at my study," said Archibald to Mr Gourlay. In January 1572 he was tested by the brethren. He was offered a Greek Testament, but declined it. "Think ye, sir, that every minister who occupies the pulpit has Greek?" After trifling with a psalm-book, he asked some minister to pray for him, "for I am not used to pray." After giving out his text, he read quantities of the context, "and so continued his exercise *with mony rastlie noises*," writes the scandalised secretary of Knox. "O Lord, what shall be said when such dumb dogs shall be suffered to mock the ministry of Thy word and the truth thereof in this manner!"

However disorderly called, Archibald had his new living, and was parson of Glasgow. But by April 1572 Morton had found out his treasonable dealings with his deadly enemies, the Castilians, Kirkcaldy, Lethington, and the rest. Morton used to say that there would never be peace in Scotland till some ministers were hanged; why did he not "rax a rope" with the parson of Glasgow? According to 'The Historie of King James the Sext,' Archibald was not content with smuggling French gold into the castle "in a frear of figs." He also set on his worthy servant, Binning (who had been with him at Darnley's murder), to shoot Morton with a pistol, "but his gun made no service"—that is, missed fire. Binning was handed over to Drury, the Marshal of Berwick, in whose service Archibald was a paid spy. The hero himself was imprisoned in the house of his kinsman, Douglas of Lochleven, and lay where Mary had lain.

Hitherto I have followed printed books; but now I have fresh light on Archibald. After Morton's execution in 1581 Archie fled to England, thence to France, intrigued with Mary, and was imprisoned by Elizabeth. Ciphred papers were found in his rooms, and these contained the story of his dealings against Morton.¹

To take Archibald's most glorious deeds: in October 1571

he informed Lethington of the time and place of the laying of artillery, by Morton's forces, against the castle. He "output and betrayed" Mr James Makgill, a great Puritan and anti-Marian, then Clerk of the Register. He carried letters to and fro for the Castilians while in the service of Morton and Lennox, their deadly foes. He won the captain of Blackness over from his own party to that of Mary. He supplied the besieged castle with wine. He let Kirkcaldy know of Lennox's departure to Stirling, whereon Kirkcaldy organised a raid and Lennox was shot. He contrived to carry Kirkcaldy's letters to France. Amusingly enough, he provoked his brother preachers to resist Morton's invasion of their stipends and his erection of bishops! Archie nowhere shines more splendidly than as the secret leader of that nobly independent band, the Presbyterian ministers. He brought into the castle 5000 gold crowns of Flanders—to be sure he kept 1000. He and Grange devised a notable scheme. The soldiers of both parties were mutinous for want of pay. Morton's party were to hand over Morton and Lindsay to their enemies in the castle; while the castle men were to deliver Huntly and the Duke of Châtellherault into the opposite camp, that of Lethington and Kirkcaldy. It was thought that the warriors of either side would get the

¹ "Sum notes that maye be laid to the charge of Mr Archibale Douglas collected upon the sight of his letters decipherid and otherwise." State Papers, Scotland. Elizabeth, vol. xxx. No. 42. Record Office.

money out of these hostages, and, at worst, by Lethington Châtelherault and Huntly never would be missed.

Archibald was also in a scheme for eloping with the widow of the Regent Moray from her house, that she might not marry the brother of Argyll. He also managed the conveyance of letters from Mary in her English prison, and missives for Lesley, Bishop of Ross. By his influence with his English employers he prevented the capture of Ferniehurst, who later looked over his huge Spanish ruff at the execution of Morton — or was it Gowrie?

Such were Archibald's faithful services to his kinsman and benefactor, Morton, who made an error when he did not hang this reverend Lord of Session. Lady Morton, who was mad, "would not company with her husband" (who consoled himself with the widow of Captain Cullen — he had hanged the captain), "alleging that Morton was not her husband, but that he was Mr Archibald Douglas; that her husband was dead, and that Mr Archibald had killed him." So says Hume of Godscroft. Archibald "got on the nerves," as her sex says, of Lady Morton.

Morton lost the regency in 1578, and, somehow, Archibald emerged from his prison on the isle of Lochleven, and in November he was restored to his place on the Bench. I doubt that Morton was not very fond of his kinsman, after all that had come and gone. On the

Old Year's day of 1580 the toils which Mary, Sir James Balfour, the royal favourite Lennox, and Knox's brother-in-law, a Stewart of Ochiltree, had woven round Morton were suddenly tightened. He was arrested on the charge of Darnley's murder. Archibald happened to be in Moreham Castle. Young Douglas of Longniddrie rode thither with the news, foundering his horse, and Archibald "lap ower" the Border to Berwick, and his old paymaster, Drury.

Archibald would have been a valuable witness against Morton, but he feared being put to the torture, which he knew that he could not stand. However, Archibald (and this makes Morton's later conduct indefensible) did what he could for his benefactor in prison. He forged letters for him. On Morton's arrest, Elizabeth sent Thomas Randolph to do his best for that godly man. Randolph, before the Estates, produced letters from or about James's favourite, Lennox, implicating him in a Catholic plot. But Lennox, or his allies, arrested Archibald's brother, Douglas of Whittingham, himself a Lord of Session. Douglas, on a distant view of the boot, the engine of torture, let everything out. Our Archibald had forged the letters implicating Lennox, had arranged that they should be intercepted and brought to his friend Drury, commanding at Berwick, and so sent on to Elizabeth's Government, who made Randolph produce them to damage

Lennox and save Morton. Ever after Randolph highly respected Archibald "for his honest dealing."

This I reckon one of Archibald's noblest actions. What will not a gallant Douglas do for his distressed chief? But Archibald's elder brother revealed his conduct as a high-minded forger, and Morton displayed the blackest ingratitude. On the other hand, the Douglas brothers, Archie and Whittingham, were reconciled, though, as we have seen, Whittingham denounced Archibald, as did his man, Binning, in June 1581. On July 21 Archibald wrote to Walsingham: he wished to be allowed to see Elizabeth, and to clear his saintly character. By October our friend was in London: he had apparently been in France, intriguing, during the interval. He was forfeited at home in November, but in London that veteran diplomatist, Randolph, bore witness to Archibald's services to England — forgery and all. None the less in September 1582 Elizabeth had Archibald arrested, and Harry Killigrew spoke of him as "an old fox," — an invidious description.

Archibald professed utter ignorance as to his offence against Elizabeth. He had, of course, been intriguing with Mary, when the Morton game was up, in Scotland. While he was in France (September 1581), Mary had asked her ambassador (a nephew of Cardinal Beaton) to get what he could out of Archi-

bald. Mary knew a good deal about him. In 1572 he had been in correspondence with her, while serving under Morton's colours. If he would not speak out, Archbishop Beaton might have him "extradited" to Scotland, Mary said, where a useful engine, the boot, might make him more loquacious. Finally Mary adopted Archibald as a supporter, and tried to get him a French pension. For his dealings with her then, he was imprisoned by Elizabeth in September 1582, and he wanted to know why? He had, indeed, written a letter to Mary, with Walsingham's knowledge, and had, dramatically, "said things" about Elizabeth. He was so unlucky as not to be allowed the services of a barber, owing to the plague and the attendance of the barbers on infected patients.¹ Archibald being a captive, Walsingham attempted his political virtue. He was deep in Mary's secrets: at what price would he sell them, Mary, and himself? Then bargaining began. On December 18, 1582, Archibald wrote a long letter to Walsingham. He still wanted to know why an innocent man was kept a prisoner. In April 1583 a new spy, Fowler, was brought into communication with our hero. He offered freedom, and an income in England, if Archibald would sell Mary's secrets, remaining in appearance her adherent, but confiding all to Walsingham. To the amazement of Fowler, Mr Douglas raised the point of honour.

¹ State Papers, Scotland, vol. xxx. No. 53. Record Office.

"He had promised to be true and constant to her" (Mary), "and he believes that she is persuaded. If he were to be her enemy again, what a shame and disgrace it would be to him! . . . Yea, he would be in great danger hereafter," for James VI. was then rather of his mother's party. However, Archibald would think over the proposal to turn traitor.¹ He wished to be allowed to take his chance in Scotland; but on May 2, 1583, Fowler found him in a consenting humour. He made offers of service, if he were allowed to go home and stand trial for Darnley's murder. His acquittal would readily be arranged, if his friends were in power, but he had still to wait. "As for the confession made by the Earl of Morton," he said, "and penned by the ministers" (the preachers who heard Morton's confession), "it avails nothing, for *confessio confessionum de jure non valet*, and it cannot prove five shillings."² Archibald knew the law. Morton's confession, that Archibald confessed his guilt to Morton, was not worth five shillings. And so it proved to be.

In August 1584 James VI. practically sold his mother to Elizabeth by sending to her Court the charming and beautiful traitor, deep in Mary's secrets, the Master of Gray. The result is familiar. Mary

was delivered over to Elizabeth by the Master, and by Archibald, who "is well practised in deciphering." By May 13, 1584, he was "received into Elizabeth's favour again." In 1585 he was doing the dirty work of James VI., arranging *his* price. By September 15, 1585, Archibald's own pardon for Darnley's murder was being negotiated. On April 10, 1586, Elizabeth recommended him "for his loyalty" to James's more favourable consideration. By April 30 this double-dyed murderer was approaching the young king, whose father's blood was on his hands, as his mother's blood was soon to be. On May 6 he described to Walsingham his interview with James. They met privately in the chamber of the Master of Gray. Said James—

"At your departure" (his flight in 1581) "I was your enemy, now I am and shall be your friend. You are not ignorant what the laws of this realm are, and what may best agree with my honour to be done for your safety. . . . I myself do believe that you are innocent of my father's murder, except by foreknowledge and concealing, a fault so common in those days that no man of any dealing could misknow, and yet so perilous to be revealed *in respect of all the actors in that tragedy*, that no man without extreme danger could utter any speech thereof, because they did see it and could not amend it."

Morton had died for this very "foreknowledge and concealing." James, however, pro-

¹ Fowler to Walsingham, April 15, 1583. State Papers, Scotland, vol. xxxi. No. 98. MSS. in Record Office.

² Fowler to Walsingham, [May 1583. State Papers, Scotland, vol. xxxii, No. 54.

mised to "square" justice in Archibald's case, and began to ask about his own chances of the English crown. Archibald gave him advice as to conciliating Elizabeth, and did some other diplomatic turns with Maitland, brother of Lethington.¹ Randolph praised his "honest dealing." On June 17 he reported to Walsingham a plot in favour of Mary, and Elizabeth appointed him her spy in Scotland. In September he was James's ambassador to Elizabeth. Justice had been "squared." Archibald's brother, Douglas of Whittingham, who had revealed his forgeries, was on the bench! *Par nobile fratrum!*² The collusive trial, arranged by James, had been, said a contemporary, "the stinkingest shame" ever known in Scotland. So James was at liberty to send the known murderer of Riccio, the known murderer of his own father, the traitor to Morton and to himself, the forger, the spy, the betrayer of his captive mother, to the Court of her deadly enemy.

"What has your House done, sir," said Macnamara to Prince Charles, "that a curse should follow them?" Had the whole House of Stuart been saints, this infamy of James VI., a man of twenty, might deserve a curse like that of the House of Thyestes. It was the most infamous action, "the stinkingest shame," to send the parson

of Glasgow to Elizabeth as ambassador while Mary's fate trembled in the balance. On November 20, 1586, our Archibald advised that some bucks should be sent to James "that the pleasure may tend to put out another grief," the "grief" being the mortal peril of James's mother. To Archibald Mary's life meant a sword hanging over his own head and over the head of the Master of Gray; for both men were Mary's betrayers, and she knew it, and had a good memory for traitors. "Mortui non mordent"—"the dead do not bite," Gray used to tell Elizabeth, if we may believe Camden. So the axe fell at Fotheringhay, while Archibald, his mind at ease, interested himself in alchemy and the philosopher's stone.

Things had not gone very well with him (August 20, 1587), "he has lost all that he possessed in his endeavours to serve the Queen of England." James repudiated him in March 1588. Extravagant gratitude was no feature of Elizabeth's character. In 1589 Archibald complains to Walsingham that there is a tendency to "pick quarrels with him." Even the Master of Gray had ceased to be affectionate. Archibald was a beggar to Elizabeth, was "altogether ruined." He played the spy on the Master of Gray, *il faut vivre*. His bills came in to roost. One bond of £1000 after another was protested.

¹ State Papers, vol. xxxix. No. 66. Record Office. A very long and curious despatch.

² Pitcairn, i. ii. p. 142.

I can conceive no posture more deplorable than that of a gentleman of ancient lineage who plays the expensive part of political spy at his own charges. James publicly marked poor Archibald as a liar in November 1590. In 1596 Archibald was in danger of outlawry, and "being put to the horn." He was probably mixed up in noisy futile plots of the wild Francis Stewart, Earl of Bothwell. He hung on, a news-vendor to Burghley, ill paid, but still tattling, still occasionally consulted by the English Ministers. I lose touch and trace of him in 1601; "the time of his death has not been discovered," say the historians of the Senators of the College of Justice.

Archibald was a victim of the ingratitude of the great. Morton, for whom he had striven so hard, betrayed him. James ceased to be his friend, when once Archibald had done what was needed—when Mary's head had fallen. In Elizabeth's service he was allowed to run into hopeless debt. The Kirk has never boasted of her leader against bloody Prelacy; the Scottish judges have erected

to Archibald no memorial. Even the historian of his ancient and noble house, Sir William Fraser, is almost silent about this accomplished gentleman. His career and character prove that a Lowlander may page with Lovat and Glen-garry; and really I think that Archibald Douglas greatly excels these two celebrated persons in all the qualities of infamy. He worked on a wider stage, among people more tragically celebrated: he betrayed, forged, stole, spied, and murdered on a scale of almost epic grandeur. Mr Hosack even suspects him of having had a hand in forging the Casket letters. He was capable of it, but forgers were as common as blackberries. In the Burgh Records of Edinburgh I find a surgeon, about 1564, receiving two pounds for raising from the dead a woman who had been buried for some days, and for healing two "false notaries" whose hands had been chopped off at the wrists. That penalty among others Archibald deserved. But our rough island story might have been different had Morton made his cousin Archbishop of St Andrews.

THE HOUSE THAT WAS NEVER BUILT.

BY HENRY LAWSON.

THERE had been heavy rain and landslips all along the branch railway which left the Great Western line from Sydney just beyond the Blue Mountains, and ran through thick bush and scrubby ridgy country and along great alluvial sidings—where the hills on the opposite side of the wide valleys (misty in depths) faded from deep blue into the pale azure of the sky—and over the ends of western spurs to the little farming, mining, and pastoral town of Solong, situated in a circle of blue hills on the banks of the willow-fringed Cudgegong river.

The line was hopelessly blocked, and some publicans at Solong had put on the old coach-road a couple of buggies, a waggonette, and an old mail-coach—relic of the days of Cob & Co., which had been resurrected from some back-yard and tinkered up—to bring the train passengers on from the first break in the line over the remaining distance of forty miles or so. Capertee Station (old time, “Capertee Camp”—a teamster’s camp) was the last station before the first wash-out, and there the railway line and the old road parted company for the last time before reaching Solong—the one to run round by the ends of the western spurs that spread fan-like, and the other to go through and over the rough country.

The train reached Capertee

about midnight in broad moonlight that was misty in the valleys and round the blue of Crown Ridge. I got a “box-seat” beside the driver on the old coach. It was a grand old road—one of the old main coach-roads of New South Wales—broad and white, metalled nearly all the way, and in nearly as good condition as on the day when the first passenger train ran into Solong and the last used section of the old road was abandoned. It dated back to the bush-ranging days—right back to convict times: it ran through tall dark bush, up over gaps or “saddles” in high ridges, down across deep dark gullies, and here and there across grey, marshy, curlew-haunted flats. Cob & Co.’s coach-and-six, with “Royal Mail” gilded on the panels, had dashed over it in ten- and twelve-mile stages in the old days, the three headlamps flashing on the wild dark Bush at night, and maybe twenty-four passengers on board. The biggest rushes to richest gold-fields in the West had gone over this old road on coaches, on carts, on drays, on horse and bullock waggons, on horseback, and on foot; new chums from all the world and from all stations in life.

“When many a step was on the mountains,
Marching West to the land of gold.”

And a few came back rich

—red, round-faced, and jolly —on the box-seat of Cob & Co.'s, treating the driver and all hands, "going home" to sweethearts or families. (Home people will never feel the meaning of those two words, "going home," as it is felt in a new land.) And many came back broken men, tramping in rags, and carrying their swags through the dusty heat of the drought in December or the bitter pelting rain in the mountains in June. Some came back grey who went as boys; and there were many who never came back.

I remembered the old mile-trees, with a section of bark cut away and the distances cut in Roman letters in the hardened sap—the distance from Bowen Fells, the railway terminus then. It was a ghostly old road, and if it wasn't haunted it should have been. There was an old decaying and nearly deserted coaching town or two; there were abandoned farms and half-way inns, built of stone, with the roofs gone and nettles growing high between the walls; the remains of an orchard here and there—a few gnarled quince-trees—and the bush reclaiming its own again. It was a haunted ride for me, because I had last ridden over this old road long ago when I was young—going to see the city for the first time—and because I was now on my way to attend the funeral of one of my father's blood from whom I had parted in anger.

We slowly climbed, and almost as slowly descended, the

steep siding of a great hill called Aaron's Pass, and about a mile beyond the foot of the hill I saw a spot I remembered passing on the last journey down, long ago. Rising back from the road, and walled by heavy bush, was a square clearing, and in the background I saw plainly, by the broad moonlight, the stone foundations for a large house; from the front an avenue of grown pines came down to the road.

"Why!" I exclaimed, turning to the driver, "was that house burnt down?"

"No," he said slowly. "That house was never built."

I stared at the place again and caught sight of a ghostly-looking light between the lines of the foundations, which I presently made out to be a light in a tent.

"There's some one camping there," I said.

"Yes," said the driver, "some old swaggy or 'hatter.' I seen him comin' down. I don't know nothing about that there place." (I hadn't "shouted" for him yet.)

I thought and remembered. I remembered myself, as a boy, being sent a coach journey along this road to visit some relatives in Sydney. We passed this place, and the women in the coach began to talk of the fine house that was going to be built there. The ground was being levelled for the foundations, and young pines had been planted, with stakes round them to protect them from the cattle. I remembered being mightily interested in the place, for the women said that the house was to be a two-storeyed one. I

thought it would be a wonderful thing to see a two-storeyed house there in the Bush. The height of my ambition was to live in a house with stairs in it. The women said that this house was being built for young Brassington, the son of the biggest squatter then in the district, who was going to marry the daughter of the next biggest squatter. That was all I remember hearing the women say.

Three or four miles along the road was a public-house, with a post-office, general store, and blacksmith shop attached, as is usual in such places—all that was left of the old pastoral and coaching town of Ilford. I “shouted” for the driver at the shanty, but got nothing further out of him concerning the fate of the house that was never built. I wanted that house for a story.

However, while yarning with some old residents at Solong, I mentioned the Brassingtons, and picked up a few first links in the story. The young couple were married and went to Sydney for their honeymoon. The story went that they intended to take a trip to the old country and Paris, to be away a twelvemonth, and the house was to be finished and ready for them on their return. Young Brassington himself had a big sheep-run round there. The railway wasn’t thought of in those days, or if it was, no Brassington could have dreamed that the line could have been brought to Solong in any other direction than through the property of the “Big Brassingtons,” as they were called. Well, the

young couple went to Sydney, but whether they went farther the old residents did not know. All they knew was that within a few weeks, and before the stone foundations for the brick walls of the house were completed, the building contract was cancelled, the workmen were dismissed, and the place was left as I last saw it; only the ornamental pines had now grown to trees. The Brassingtons and the bride’s people were English families and reserved. They kept the story, if there was a story, to themselves. The girl’s people left the district and squatted on new stations up country. The Big Brassingtons came down in the world and drifted to the city, as many smaller people do, more and more every year. Neither young Brassington nor his wife was ever again seen or heard of in the district.

I attended my relative’s funeral, and next day started back for Sydney.

Just as we reached Ilford, as it happened, the pin of the fore under-carriage of the coach broke, and it took the blacksmith several hours to set it right. The place was dull, the publican was not communicative—or else he harped on the old local grievance of the railway not having come that way—so, about half an hour before I thought the coach would be ready, I walked on along the road to stretch my legs. I walked on and on until I came, almost unaware, to the site of the house that was never built. The tent was still there, in fact it was a permanent camp, and I was rather surprised to see

the man working with a trowel on a corner of the unfinished foundations of the house. At first I thought he was going to build a stone hut in the corner, but when I got close to him I saw that he was working carefully on the original plan of the building: he was building the unfinished parts of the foundation walls up to the required height. He had bricklayer's tools, a bag of lime, and a heap of sand, and had worked up a considerable quantity of mortar. It was a rubble foundation: he was knocking off the thin end of a piece of stone to make it fit, and the clanging of the trowel prevented his hearing my footsteps.

"Good day, mate," I said, close beside him.

I half expected he'd start when I spoke, but he didn't: he looked round slowly, but with a haunted look in his eyes, as if I might have been one of his ghosts. He was a tall man, gaunt and haggard-eyed, as many men are in the Bush; he may have been but little past middle age, and grey before his time.

"Good day," he said, and he set the stone in its place, carefully flush with the outer edge of the wall, before he spoke again. Then he looked at the sun, which was low, laid down his trowel, and asked me to come to the tent-fire. "It's turning chilly," he said. It was a model camp, everything clean and neat both inside the tent and out; he had made a stone fireplace with a bark shelter over it, and a table and bench under another little shed,

with shelves for his tin cups and plates and cooking utensils. He put a box in front of the fire and folded a flour-bag on top of it for a seat for me, and hung the billy over the fire. He sat on his heels and poked the burning sticks, abstractedly I thought, or to keep his hands and thoughts steady.

"I see you're doing a bit of building," I said.

"Yes," he said, keeping his eyes on the fire; "I'm getting on with it slowly."

I don't suppose he looked at me half-a-dozen times the whole while I was in his camp. When he spoke he talked just as if he were sitting yarning in a row of half-a-dozen of us. Presently he said suddenly, and giving the fire a vicious dig with his poker—

"That house must be finished by Christmas."

"Why?" I asked, taken by surprise. "What's the hurry?"

"Because," he said, "I'm going to be married in the New Year—to the best and dearest girl in the Bush."

There was an awkward pause on my part, but presently I pulled myself together.

"You'll never finish it by yourself," I said. "Why don't you put on some men?"

"Because," he said, "I can't trust them. Besides, how am I to get bricklayers and carpenters in a place like this?"

I noticed all through that his madness or the past in his mind was mixed up with the real and the present.

"Couldn't you postpone the marriage?" I asked.

"No!" he exclaimed, start-

ing to his feet. "No!" and he looked round wildly on the darkening Bush. There was madness in his tone that time, the last "No!" sounding as if from a man who was begging for his life.

"Couldn't you run up a shanty, then, to live in until the house is ready?" I suggested, to soothe him.

He gave his arm an impatient swing. "Do you think I'd ask that girl to live in a hut?" he said. "She ought to live in a palace!"

There seemed no way out of it, so I said nothing: he turned his back and stood looking away over the dark, low-lying sweep of Bush towards sunset. He folded his arms tight, and seemed to me to be holding himself. After a while he let fall his arms and turned and blinked at me and the fire like a man just woke from a doze or rousing himself out of a deep reverie.

"Oh, I almost forgot the billy!" he said. "I'll make some tea—you must be hungry."

He made the tea and fried a couple of slices of ham; he laid the biggest slice on a thick slice of white baker's bread on a tin plate, and put it and a pint-pot full of tea on a box by my side. "Have it here, by the fire," he said; "it's warmer and more comfortable."

I took the plate on my knee, and I must say I thoroughly enjoyed that meal. The bracing mountain air and the walk had made me hungry. The "hatter"¹ had his meal standing up, cutting his ham on a

slice of bread with a clasp-knife. It was Bush fashion, and set me thinking of some old times. He ate very little, and, as far as I saw, he didn't smoke. Non-smokers are very scarce in the Bush.

I saw by the way his tent was pitched and his camp arranged generally, and by the way he managed the cooking, that he must have knocked about the Bush for some years.

He put the plates and things away and came and sat down on the other empty gin-case by my side, and fell to poking the fire again. He never showed the least curiosity as to who I was, or where I came from, or what I was doing on this deserted track: he seemed to take me as a matter of course—but all this was in keeping with Bush life in general.

Presently he got up and stood looking upwards over the place where the house should have been.

"I think now," he said slowly, "I made a mistake in not having the verandahs carried all round the house."

"I—I beg pardon!"

"I should have had the balcony all round instead of on two sides only, as the man who made the plan suggested; it would have looked better and made the house cooler in summer."

I thought as I listened, and presently I saw that it was a case of madness within madness, so to speak: he was mad on the idea that he could build the house himself, and then he had moods when he imagined

¹ *Hatter*, a man who lives and works alone in the Bush.

that the house had been built and he had been married and had reared a family.

"You could easily get the balcony carried round," I said; "it wouldn't cost much—you can get good carpenters at Solong."

"Yes," he said. "I'll have it done after Christmas." Then he turned from the house and blinked down at me.

"I am sorry," he said, "that there's no one at home. I sent the wife and family to Sydney for a change. I've got the two boys at the Sydney Grammar-School. I think I'll send the eldest to King's College at Parramatta. The girls will have to get along with a governess at home, and learn to help their mother——"

And so he went on talking away just as a man who has made money in the Bush, and is married and settled down, might yarn to an old bachelor Bush mate.

"I suppose I'll have to get a good piano," he went on. "The girls must have some amusement: there'll be no end of balls and parties. I suppose the boys will soon be talking of getting 'fivers' and 'tenners' out of the 'guvner' or 'old man.' It's the way of the world. And they'll marry and leave us. It's the way of the world——"

It was awful to hear him go on like this, the more so because he never smiled—just talked on as if he had said the same thing over and over again. Presently he stopped, and his eyes and hands began to wander: he sat down on his heel to the fire again and start-

ed poking it. I began to feel uneasy; I didn't know what other sides there might be to his madness, and wished the coach would come along.

"You've knocked about the Bush a good deal?" I asked. I couldn't think of anything else to say, and I thought he might break loose if I let him brood too long.

"Yes," he said, "I have."

"Been in Queensland and the Gulf Country, I suppose?"

"I have."

His tone and manner seemed a bit more natural. He had knocked about pretty well all over Australia, and had been in many places where I had been. I had got him on the right track, and after a bit he started telling Bush yarns and experiences, some of them awful, some of them very funny, and all of them short and good; and now and then, looking at the side of his face, which was all he turned to me, I thought I detected the ghost of a smile.

One thing I noticed about him: when he spoke as a mad-man, he talked like a man who had been fairly well educated (or sometimes, I fancied, like a young fellow who was studying to be a school-teacher); his speech was deliberate and his grammar painfully correct—far more so than I have made it; but when he spoke as an old Bushman, he dropped his *g*'s and often turned his grammar back to front. But that reminds me that I have met English college men who did the same thing after being a few years in the Bush: either they dropped their particular

way of speaking because it was mimicked, because they were laughed and chaffed out of it, or they fell gradually into the habit of talking as rough Bushmen do (they learnt Australian), as clean-mouthed men fall, in spite of themselves, into the habit of swearing, in the heat and hurry and rough life of a shearing-shed. And, coming back into civilised life, these men, who had been well brought up, drop into their old manner and style of speaking as readily as the foulest-mouthed man in a shed or camp—who, amongst his fellows, cannot say three words without an oath—can, when he finds himself in a decent home in the woman-and-girl world, yarn by the hour without letting slip a solitary little damn.

The hatter warmed up the tea-billy again, got out some currant buns, which he had baked himself in the camp oven, and we were yarning comfortably like two old Bushmen, and I had almost forgotten that he was "ratty," when we heard the coach coming. I jumped up to hurry down to the road. This seemed to shake him up. He gripped my hand hard and glanced round in his frightened haunted way. I never saw the eyes of a man look so hopeless and helpless as his did just then.

"I'm sorry you're going," he said, in a hurried way. "I'm sorry you're going. But—but they all go. Come again, come again—we'll all be glad to see you."

I had to hurry off and leave him. "We all," I suppose, meant himself and his ghosts.

I ran down between the two rows of pines and reached the road just as the coach came up. I found the publican from Ilford aboard—he was taking a trip to Sydney. As the coach went on I looked up the clearing and saw the hatter standing straight behind the fire, with his arms folded and his face turned in our direction. He looked ghastly in the firelight, and at that distance his face seemed to have an expression of listening blindness. I looked round on the dark Bush, with, away to the left, the last glow of sunset fading from the bed of it, like a bed of reddening coals, and I looked up at the black loom of Aaron's Pass, and thought that never a man, sane or mad, was left in such a depth of gloomy loneliness.

"I see you've been yarning with him yonder," said the publican, who seemed to have relaxed wonderfully.

"Yes."

"You know these parts, don't you?"

"Yes. I was about here as a boy."

He asked me what my name might be. I told him it was Smith. He blinked a while.

"I never heard of any one by the name of Smith in the district," he said.

Neither had I. I told him that we lived at Solong, and didn't stay long. It saved time.

"Ever heard of the Big Brassingtons?"

"Yes."

"Ever heard the yarn of the house that wasn't built?"

I told him how much I had heard of it.

"And that's about all any on 'em knows. Have you any idea who that man back yonder is?"

"Yes, I have."

"Well, who do you think it is?"

"He is, or rather he was, young Brassington."

"You've hit it!" said the publican. "I know—and a few others."

"And do you know what became of his wife," I asked.

"I do," said the shanty-keeper, who had a generous supply of whisky with him, and seemed to have proceeded to fill up for the trip.

He said no more for a while, and when I had remained silent long enough, he went on, very deliberately and impressively:—

"One yarn is that the girl wasn't any good; that when she was married to Brassington, and as soon as they got to Sydney, she met a chap she'd been carrying on with before she married Brassington (or that she'd been married to in secret), an' she cleared off with him, leaving her fortnight-old husband. That was one yarn."

"Was it?" I said.

"Yes," said the publican. "That yarn was a lie." He opened a flask of whisky and passed it round.

"There was madness in the family," he said, after a nip.

"Whose?" I asked. "Brassington's?"

"No," said the publican in a tone that implied contempt at my ignorance, in spite of its innocence—"the girl's. Her mother had been in a 'sylum, and so had her grandmother.

It was—it was heridited. Some madnnesses is heridited, an' some comes through worry and hard graft (that's mine), an' some comes through drink, and some through worse, and, but as far as I've heard, all madnnesses is pretty much the same. My old man was a warder in a 'sylum. They have their madnnesses a bit different, the same as boozers has their D.T.'s different; but, takin' it by the lump, it's pretty much all the same. The difference is accordin' to their natures when they're sane. All men are——"

"But about young Mrs Brassington," I interrupted.

"Young Mrs Brassington? Rosy Webb she was—daughter of Webb the squatter. Rosy was the brightest, best, good-heartedest, an' most ladylike little girl in the district, an' the heriditry business come on her in Sydney, about a week after she was married to young Brassington. She was only twenty. Here——" He passed the flask round.

"And what happened?" I asked.

"What happened?" he repeated. Then he pulled himself together, as if conscious that he had shown signs of whisky. "Everything was done, but it was no use. She died in a year in a 'sylum."

"How do you know that?"

"How do I know that?" he repeated in a tone of contempt. "How do I know that? Well, I'll tell you how. *My old wife* was in service at Brassington's station at the time; the oldest servant—an' young Brassington wired to her from Sydney

to come and help him in his trouble. Old Mrs Brassington was bedridden, an' they kep it from her."

"And about young Brassington?"

"About young Brassington? He took a swag an' wandered through the Bush. We've had him at our place several times all these years, but he always wandered off again. My old woman tried everything with him, but it was all no use. Years ago she used to get him to talk of things as they was, in hopes of bringin' his mind back, but he was always worse after. She does all she can for him even now, but he's mighty independent. The last five or six years he's been taken with the idea of buildin' that cursed house. He'll stay there till he gets short of money, an' then he'll go Out-Back, shearin', stock-ridin', drovin', cookin', fencin',—anything till he gets a few pounds. Then he'll settle down and build away at that bloody house. He's knocked about so much that he's a regular old Bushman. While he's an old Bushman he's all right an' amusin' an' good company; but when he's Brassington he's mad—— Don't you ever let on to my old woman that I told you. I allers let my tongue run a bit when I get out of that hole we're living in. We've kept the secret all these years, but what does it matter now?—I ask you."

"It doesn't matter much," I said.

"Nothing matters much, it seems to me, nothing matters a damn. The Big Brassingtons come down years ago; the old people's gone, and the young scattered God knows where or how. The Webbs (the girl's people) are away up in new country, an' the girls (they was mostly all girls) are married an' settled down by this time. We kept the secret, an' the Webbs kept the secret—even when the dirty yarns was goin' round—so's not to spoil the chances of the other girls. What about the chances of their husbands? Some on 'em might be in the same hell as Brassington, for all I know. The Brassingtons kept the secret because I suppose they reckoned it didn't matter much. Nothing matters much in this world——"

But I was thinking of another young couple, who had married long ago, whose married life was twenty long years of shameful quarrels, of useless brutal recrimination—not because either was bad, but because their natures were too much alike; of the house that was built; of the family that was reared; of the sons and daughters who "went wrong"; of the father and mother separated after twenty years; of the mother dead of a broken heart; of the father (in a lunatic asylum), whose mania was not to build houses, but to obtain and secrete matches for the purpose of burning houses down.

A HALT ON THE KING'S HIGHWAY.

BY HUGH CLIFFORD.

THE mighty tracks which nowadays lead up and down the world are set at intervals with houses of call,—we name them coaling-stations,—which serve the same purposes as did the inns upon the great high-roads in the days when steam was not. Here the traveller takes his rest for a little space before continuing his journey; here he stretches his legs cramped by confinement, sleeps in a bed again, eats his meal and drinks his glass, chatting with mine host and the folk of the distant hamlet; here the weary beast that has borne him thus far upon his way is baited, and refreshed for further effort. In olden times, if men speak truly, the inns of England were famous throughout the world; and now that these bigger hostels have come into being to serve a vaster traffic, it is still those of the English that maintain the supremacy.

The men and women of British stock who make up so large a portion of the two contending streams which flow perennially eastward—thenoisy, happy people, with glad faces, and a stave of the homeward-bound song on their lips; and those other sadder, graver folk, who pass soberly back to the heat and the dust, the sorrow and the toil, leaving so much of their hearts, and all too often a “lot of little things” behind them—have been taught by

custom to accept as part of the ordinary scheme of life the sight of the old flag flying, and the King's law running at every point which they touch upon their road. But to foreigners, lusting after colonial empire in obedience to the modern *Zeitgeist*, and viewing with jaundiced eyes the ubiquity of Great Britain, these things are an insolence, an offence. If England stood neutral, a naval war in Asia for any other nation of the earth would be an ignoble affair of colliers and their escorts, the which may best be likened to the fighting of tethered rams: for England alone such a conflict would be precisely the same as a struggle carried on in European waters. Even in times of peace the long chain of ports that girdles half the world, at each of which the Englishman finds his own race dominant, hears his own tongue sounding in his ears, and notes that the laws and customs of these stranger lands are the laws and customs of home, is a thing sufficiently impressive. He is more than human if his heart fail to beat with a quickened throb of pride at the discovery that the ocean road he travels is in very truth nought other than the King's highway.

Now that the thing has been done, it looks so easy, so inevitable. One hardly pauses to inquire how the English

came to these scattered sea-ports: they have the air of having been in possession since the beginning of things. Yet every one of these modern caravanserais has its history, at once marvellously old and strangely new. Prosaic centres of trade they are to-day, but each one of them is built up upon a foundation of romance, adventure, self-denial, self-sacrifice, success unnoted, obscure failure, high hopes blighted, faith triumphant, and the indomitable resolution of our race. Men have suffered and toiled, and striven and died in the making of these outposts of empire, with only the glaring Eastern sun for witness, and dazed brown folk to watch and wonder at them. In their blood and their sweat the seed has been watered, and to-day the fruit is borne for us. A miracle has been wrought, and we who behold look upon it from long custom as upon a common thing.

One-and-eighty years ago there lay amid empty seas a big island cast like a slipper from the foot of Southern Asia. It was smothered in dense jungle, save where, nicked out of the mangrove-swamps, a few dust-coloured fishing-villages staggered on piles above the mud-banks in the great sheltered bays. The few hundreds of brown men and women who lived in these villages, and their forebears before them, had looked out lazily year after year at the sun-glare on those blue waters—an unchanging panorama typical of the mon-

otony of the lives they dawdled away in this soft nest of brilliant colours. In this hidden cranny of the world they had toiled and loved, and wedded and died obscurely, hearing barely the echo of humanity's great conflicts, eaters of the lotos, whose most strenuous hours were as the dreamful ease of other men. And all about them the vast sun-steeped forest lay asleep.

Then suddenly, as came the prince in the fairy tale to the palace where the princess slumbered, a man burst in upon the stillness of the island—a man with the restless brain, the foresight, the irresistible energy of a younger, sturdier race. And at his rough kiss the isle awoke, till

“All the long-pent stream of life
Plunged downward in a cataract!”

That island was Singapore, that man one Stamford Raffles. The former is to-day the great half-way house of all the traffic of the Eastern and Far Eastern world; the latter, having served his country faithfully, struggled home to die—as every exile amongst us hopes to do—and old John Company, whose head for business was keener than its eye for romance, sued his widow relentlessly for some paltry sums that were in dispute when its tried servant paid his final debt.

Sir Stamford Raffles founded Singapore in 1819, and the annual mail from Leadenhall Street brought him peremptory orders to abandon it, to which frenzied expostulations were returned in the follow-

ing spring, until so many years had elapsed that the new-born town had had time in which to justify its existence. It is curious that the port, which to-day is chiefly valuable for the services it renders to shipping, should owe its very existence to the fortunate slowness of communication by sea in the years which saw its foundation!

During the month of April, in this the first year of the reign of Edward VII., there has been a mighty bustle of preparation in this caravan-serai of the King's highway in expectation of Royal visitors. Do the ghosts of the old fisher-folk ever walk, I wonder, and gaze with awe at the changed world which is the creation of eighty years of white men's toiling and scheming? If so, the transformation which has been wrought in their quiet bays may well drive them back affrighted to the Land of Shadows. Those seas, still blue, which of old were given over to the gulls and fish-kites, and furrowed only by the smacks plying between the villages and the shoals, are now crammed with crafts of every kind. Numberless steamers and sailing-ships, flying the flags of half the nationalities of two hemispheres, ride at anchor; bulky junks of China waddle under spreads of ruddy sail; panting launches scuttle hither and thither, intent and breathlessly busy; ponderous men-o'-war squat upon the waters solidly at rest; slender Malayan crafts from every island in the

archipelago and state in the peninsula are moored near the shore; boats pass and repass, rowed with the long oar-sweep of Europe or with the churning paddles of the East; and fish-shaped Chinese sampans, in number beyond all reckoning, gnaw at the sides of ships at rest, or race in packs to seize upon prey newly sighted. And the ancient peace which had endured for so many ages is rudely broken. From every side there sound the shrill screams of steam-whistles and the wailing hoots of sirens, the droning of Tamil boat-songs, the yapping of the Chinese sampan-men, the splash of oar or paddle, the rush of disturbed water, harsh cries, and the grating of craft against craft. Overhead alone all is unchanged, for the glad tropic sunshine fills the pale sky with brightness that overflows and gilds the sea and land.

But gazing shoreward at the island, where so short a time ago the untouched forest rioted behind the tiny fishing-hamlets, the transformation is still more complete. The mud-flats have been reclaimed, and the waves are now pent within sheer walls of stone. Crowding houses stand shoulder to shoulder, fighting for standing room, as far as the eye can carry, and above them the spires of many churches spring skyward; yet the greenery, which in this steaming land will take no denial, has wriggled, and striven, and pushed until it now bursts its way everywhere between the glaring walls and roofs,

softening their outlines and decking them with fresh, bright colour. To the right, the Malay quarter, breaking off from the business portion of the town, arises around the old fort which still shelters the survivors of a decaying dynasty, and spreads away and away from the Sultan's mosque to the cool palm-groves of Tanjong Kâtong. On the left the huge unsightly buildings sacred to trade face the sea with shameless front, and stretch along the fore-shore until the miles of piled coal-shed and docks—a place of grime, scurrying, black ants' nests of coolies, and a forest of tapering masts—smudges its dirty thumb-mark along the beach, defiling even the brilliant beauty of this sunny island. Inland, behind the business houses, lie streets and alleys, grotesque, crowded, teeming with life, some seemingly transported bodily from Canton, others obviously portions of India's more squalid bazaars. Farther inland still the smooth-made roads, of rich red laterite, run through trim lawns, gardens, and groves, whereof the vivid greenery contrasts wonderfully with the ruddy colour of the soil. Here, as it seems, amid a fragment of a brighter tinted, more exuberant Devonshire, the white men have built their bungalows, or wealthy Chinese merchants have made their pleasure-houses, with their inconsequent disconnected porches dwarfing the straggling buildings behind. At the back of all lies a thing called a forest reserve, which bears the same sort of relation

to real jungle that a monkey on a barrel-organ bears to a pack of apes plunging through the branches in noisy freedom.

During this month of April the signal-masts on Mount Faber and Fort Canning are hung with bunting all day long, telling of the arrival of many ships, and from dawn to dusk the saluting guns speak loudly in answer to the courtesies of foreign men-o'-war creeping in through the red portals of the harbour, where, silent, veiled, and awful, the hidden batteries lurk beneath their cloak of vegetation, and past the island in the bay on which the tall chimneys belch smoke from the furnaces that smelt three-fourths of the world's output of tin. These ships of Holland, France, and Germany have come hither to add their welcome to the royal visitors, and in the town itself the diverse nationalities which compose the population—once jarring races which now lie at peace, side by side, like the "happy families" of a travelling menagerie—are one and all preparing to attest their loyalty in the manner best suited to their natures. The Chinese roof in their streets with tawdry coloured cloths, adding appreciably to the general stuffiness of their surroundings, and run largely to the grotesque and the bizarre in sprawling hieroglyphic inscriptions and paper lanterns of weird shape and fashion; the Europeans burst out in an irruption of flags and bunting; the Tamils erect a wonderful pagoda, a thing of tinsel and the crude colours of the Orient,

surmounted by a pudding-faced fishwife with water on the brain, which is the unflattering native conception of Britannia. "It is fitting," says the cynical Malay, gazing upwards at the trident plunged menacingly into the sky. "Having annexed the whole earth, the English now invade the very heavens!" Then he joins his fellows, and labours to make ready the boats which shall escort the Ophir, and to devise strange things against the night of the torchlight procession.

Meanwhile the learned of all races draft addresses in many tongues—fair King's English, liquid Malay, noble rolling Arabic, guttural wrangling Tamil, hiccougching Chinese; . . . but the list is endless! No other city of its size in all the world can show anything approaching this babel of tongues, this strange mingling of race, creed, custom, instinct, character. Yet all these voices sound a common note; in one thing, and in this one thing alone, these peoples drawn from the ends of the earth are in accord: each one of them bears testimony to the equality of justice, the freedom of religion, the liberality of the laws, and the sure protection which they enjoy under the King's rule.

By noon on the 21st the streets are lined with troops, the crowds are gathered, the leading representatives of every nationality are assembled on Johnson's pier. Johnson's pier! Is not that a characteristic English touch? The little bit of "homey" commonplace cropping up amid the fantastic

forms and the crude colours of this Eastern world?

It is the hottest day ever known in Singapore. Incidentally it may be remarked that it always is the hottest day known when men are gathered together in crowds in a climate such as this. And in this, if you care to think about it, lies no small part of the marvel of what the English have accomplished out here in the sun-glare. The man who burned Magellan in effigy on the day after his arrival in the island may have made the common mistake of lynchers, and have selected the wrong victim, but he gave expression for all time to the feeling of blended despair and indignation with which the new-comer regards the temperature of the land in which he is doomed to live. Yet it is in this sweltering atmosphere that Englishmen have toiled, and wrought, and sweated, and in eighty years have reared a kingdom out of a wilderness. Think of it, ye gentlemen of England who live at home in ease, and wonder at the energy of a race which even a climate like a perpetual "95° in the Strand" has been unable to subdue or slacken.

For an hour the crowd stands upon the pier—the English, true to their wooden-headed standard of propriety, choked by linen collars, smothered in frock-coats, crowned by silk hats; the Malay *rājas* in their picturesque national costumes; the Chinese notables in heavy garments shaped like the copes of the Roman Catholic priesthood; a Siamese prince, resembling a diminutive life-guards-

man dipped in a succession of dye-pots; and half a hundred other curious figures—until the guns from the ships of war begin their salutes. The royal barge, which can show its heels to anything of its size in Asia, rushes up the harbour, with half-a-dozen launches panting vainly in its wake, passes through the ranks of ordered vessels, and brings up alongside the pier. A hush falls upon the people as she comes to rest. A pause, and then a lady and a young naval officer with more rings on his arm than his age would usually warrant, step out upon the crimson carpet. For a moment they stand thus while the people shout, and the bands play “God Save the King”—stand with the eyes of so many strange folk fixed upon them, with the fierce sunlight streaming over them, and all the colour of the East for a background. And what a tremendous thing it is which this Prince and Princess symbolise, as they stand thus upon this unconsidered fragment of the empire which their subjects have made theirs by inheritance, by the right of bloodless conquest! To us Englishmen they embody the idea which drives us forth to serve and rule. They stand for all that to us is dear and wonderful—for the empire, the greatest engine for good that God in His wisdom has brought into being since the beginning of years! To the Oriental they speak of an ideal, more material perhaps, but no whit less precious. The strength which knows nor fear nor favour; the toleration which is above all

prejudice; the justice that may not be bought; the freedom to earn and to possess which in the last fourscore years has changed for them the face of life,—these are the blessings flowing from the system which these “Râjas from the West” make incarnate!

But for all that, what follows is becomingly unemotional and English. Guards are inspected, formal introductions are made, and, surrounded by a clattering escort of scarlet-coated Sikh cavalry, the carriage, with its horses and postilions, drives off through the staring crowds.

Thereafter the town breaks loose, and gives itself up to rejoicing; but the day being Sunday, no public functions are held. In the afternoon the feudatory Sultans of Malaya, surrounded by their spearmen and the bearers of their golden insignia, troop up to Government House to pay their homage to their King's son, and each in turn is accorded an interview. It is a strange sight, this procession of brown men, some of whom have themselves wielded a power more autocratic than has been known amongst our people since the days of the early Plantagenets. They are, as it were, a procession of phantoms—phantoms of a blood-stained tyranny that is dead—reviving for the hour the ancient state of their kingdom, and bowing their heads, in the name of the past of war and rapine which they represent, to the heir of a monarchy which stands in the present as the embodiment of the freest of all rules.

That night Singapore is illuminated. The streets of the Chinese quarter blaze with light shed from innumerable lanterns — goggle-eyed fishes suspended and turning slowly as though alive; hideous dragons gaping at bobbing moons; animals of every kind, weirdly fashioned with horns where no horns should grow, hanging and swinging and twisting; lanterns big and little, round and square, and packed so closely that no room remains for more. Above the sky is blurred and ruddy as from some mighty conflagration; in the streets, where the fairway is kept clear for the passing of a single carriage, the brightness, the blending of unlikely colours, and the grotesque forms grinning from every side, produce an effect which is indescribable. At intervals small Chinese theatres are erected, abutting on the street, in which children or marionettes strut and scream to an audience of semi-nude coolies. Along the appointed route presently comes the royal carriage at a fast walk, surrounded by a guard of burly Sikhs, and at its back is a string of 'rickshas loaded with Europeans. The people shout, the lights flare, and the welcome of the Chinese, who own three-fourths of the property of the island, has been given to the Prince and Princess, the rule of whose House makes their undisturbed possession of these things a possibility.

The merciless white sunrise dawns next morning upon what is termed a special bank-holi-

day, but Royalty has to work hard for its living. The town-hall is packed with the *élite*, frock-coated, trimly gowned, suffocating, perspiring, but determinedly loyal. Behind the dais, upon which the Malay Sultans sit awaiting the Duke and Duchess, a great choir of men and ladies is massed about a grand piano. In a lobby and its adjoining corridor the deputations from the peoples of the colony and native states are crowded. At the end of a sweltering hour the royal party arrived. From without comes the loud words of command, the *slap* of rifles brought to the "present," and the roar of the mob. Then the assembly within rises to its feet, the Duke and Duchess with their suites step on to the dais, and the choir bursts forth, filling the building with the grand chords of the National Anthem.

The deputations follow. One address only is read; the others, enclosed in magnificent caskets, are handed to the Duke, who stands to receive them. The names of the men composing the deputations are read out as their owners file past their Prince,—homely British names, English, Scottish, and Irish, strange-sounding Malay titles, jerky Chinese monosyllables, Arabic names of Saiyid and Sheikh, names belonging to dwellers in half the provinces of India,—and the seemingly endless string of bowing figures moves on and on. No similar spectacle can be seen, perhaps, save only when the Great White Czar receives on his accession the offerings of bread

and salt on dishes of silver and gold from the tribesmen of Russia and the shaggy hordes of Central Asia. Here, in this out-of-the-way corner of the East, one catches more than a glimpse of the astonishing assortment of material which, taken together, forms the people of King Edward's empire.

The Sultan of Pêrak, a man whose loyalty, intelligence, and liberal views have done much to further English efforts in Malaya, is invested with the Grand Cross of St Michael and St George. A Companionship of the same Order is conferred, amidst loud cheers, upon the senior unofficial Member of Council for Penang, a man grown grey in the performance of unpaid duties, and then, after Handel's "Coronation" has been sung by the choir, and the choir-master has been introduced and personally complimented and thanked by the Duke, the formal ceremonies are at an end.

That afternoon a curious spectacle has been arranged more especially in honour of the Duchess. Tiers of seats have been erected on each side of a broad road, and these are now packed with several thousands of little children, who greet the visitors with a verse of "God Save the King"! Here is every type of childhood that Singapore can show, from the white—such sadly white and wan—babies of European parentage to the grinning black Tamil imps on whose skins the proverbial piece of coal would leave a white mark. Here are little brown puff-balls,

with all the grave sedateness of their Malayan ancestry; Eurasians of every tint; small yellow Chinese boys and girls with their pendent queues; trim school-children from many missions; the rising generation of every caste and creed. This, too, is a sight which only Singapore could show—these tiny British subjects, differing so widely in almost everything, yet bound together under the one system which has made the lives open to them things so much better worth the living than were those which their forefathers inherited in their own countries before the white folk came out of the West, and bade peace and order reign. And there is something more behind this crowd of little people, for every one of them is being educated, not only by books and the tyrannical three R's, but by a spirit of obedience, of self-restraint, of mutual forbearance, which is a recent growth, and are being led, almost unconsciously, towards ideals which are new to the oldest of the continents.

From the concourse of children the Duke and Duchess drive past the lawn-tennis grounds, leaving the cricket-field behind them, to the race-course, where to-day polo, not golf, is being played. Near at hand two bodies of perspiring men are playing a violent game of football in defiance of the thermometer. The English have brought many things with them from their home, but none which has done more to keep them

sane and fit for labour than their love of manly games. It is through seeking ease in such self-imposed toils as these that the energy of our people is fortified against the insidious assaults of a climate whose every soft voluptuous breath pleads for indolence.

That night a procession of lanterns, dragons, and unearthly monsters, all glowing and afire, streams past Government House for many hours. It is the illuminations over again, grotesque, fantastic, and distinctively oriental; but like all things in the East, save health alone, it lasts too long.

On Tuesday, April 23, the royal visit ends. The scene of Sunday morning is repeated, and, surrounded by Malay boats filled with screaming men brandishing dripping paddles, the royal barge passes outward to the Ophir, now lying with her escort in the roads.

On board this ship—surely the most luxurious that ever bore Prince and Princess through the mazes of Eastern romance—a small party from the shore are bidden to a lunch, itself a dream

of fairyland for folk who have fared too long and too ill on such things as the Chinese cook gives us to eat. Then the signals fly, the great vessel gets under way, her escort falls in astern, and, carrying the hearts of all their subjects with them, the Duke and Duchess of Cornwall and York steam out of the harbour to conquer new worlds which are already their own.

And we, the exiles in this stoke-hole of empire, whose duty it is to keep our little section of the old machine moving, turn back to our work—the law-making and the law-upholding, the crime-checking, the revenue-producing, the struggle to change and to improve, the task of Sisyphus that knows no ending. Ours is the workaday part, useful, commonplace, unromantic. For us

“No iron rule of kings,
But toil of serf and sweeper—
The tale of common things.”

We may rest content if, while our time lasts, we can keep this corner of the world fresh and clean for our lord the King, and for those who shall come after him.

THE LONDON IRISH.

DOCTOR JOHNSON has descended upon the Scot, and his propensity to colonise London, in certain tremendous sentences too trite for quotation. But he spoke of an exceptional time when the needy and able adventurers of the north crowded down to town at the heels of their fellow-countryman, the unpopular First Minister, Lord Bute. If the Doctor were alive to-day, and disposed, in serene forgetfulness of his country origin, to denounce non-Cockney interlopers, he would select, after a diatribe against Polish Jews, not London Scots but London Irish. The figures of each decennial census, and, still more, the experiences of local officials, doctors, and clergymen, would amply bear him out. The unimaginative returns place the numbers of Irish-born Londoners and Scottish-born Londoners at 66,465 and 53,390 respectively. These statistics by no means exhaust the question, however, since identification of race ceases with the second generation. London contains no distinctively Scots quarter with the possible exception of Islington; taken in wide areas, such as the East End, "over the water," its centre, and the West, London has many quarters that are Irish of the Irish. Why is that? Because the Scots immigration has been natural and gradual; that of the Irish at one time cataclysmic. The Famine drove

them by thousands to the Thames; they clutched at the river-side industries. Their prolific disposition encouraged by early marriage, they have spread through South London into Rotherhithe (near Jamaica Road); into Drury Lane; into Westminster, Lisson Grove, and Paddington; into all the homes of casual labour and crazy tenements. The figures have to be much enlarged by practical knowledge before the prevalence of this people, a secretive people in spite of their expansive manner, can be duly appreciated.

The Irishman counts the more in London as you near the bottom of society. Thackeray and Trollope have dealt with him as barrister, professional politician, and journalist; he has not changed materially since their day. No novelist, so far as we are aware, has rubbed shoulders with the compact little colony of Irish which, a step or two lower down, forms an important element in West End trades, especially "bespoke", tailoring and shoe-making, and which acts as intermediary—"sweating" is a most misapplied phrase in this instance—between the firm from which you buy your clothes and the workman who makes them. This settlement exists in the dingy but prosperous neighbourhoods that lie behind Oxford Street and Regent Street. Business planted it there, and the Roman Catholic

church in Warwick Street serves for a socially religious centre. A family works together, as a rule, employing in addition from two or three to eight or ten hands. At tailoring the girls, whose work is confined to waistcoats, can earn from 15s. to 18s. a-week. They sometimes prefer to emancipate themselves from paternal direction, feeling securer of their money; but they are sufficiently conservative to keep to their trade, in scorn of the easier but fluctuating attractions of dress-making. One such family we have forcibly in mind, and an excellent specimen of middle-class honesty and sobriety, with due allowance given to the hospitable instincts, it is. Three or five generations of London residence have told on it; the boys are narrow-chested, the girls pasty-faced. Withal, they give the lie to that absurdly loose statement that with the grandchildren a Cockney-born family becomes exhausted. A curious point: religious ties have made them cosmopolitan. One daughter has been married to an Italian restaurant-keeper, with a comfortable house in the suburbs; another has for husband a rich Parisian costumier. As cousins they reckon the landlords of several public-houses to which the Irishry resort, and a race-course bookmaker of abruptly variant fortunes. The men employed, nearly all Irish, compare unfavourably with "the governor" and his wife. Full of native joviality, observing many curious customs, such as "putting her in the jug"—a

fine of beer inflicted by the room on one first detected walking with his sweetheart—they lack purpose and thrift. Jewish competition has already hit them hard, yet they persist in "doing a mike" or idling, and in objecting to overtime work. Unless they reconsider their ways, they will disappear, and, it is to be feared, their masters with them.

These Irish "lower middles" form, however, an exiguous fraction of the Irish-born and Irish-descended in London. The bulk of the race lives in typical working-class neighbourhoods, such as the East End, and the very poor part of South London between Blackfriars and London Bridges, or in the worst slums of all, those that jostle wealth, such as Drury Lane, corners in Chelsea (off Pelham Crescent and Sidney Street) and Notting Hill, and whole streets in Shepherd's Bush and Kensal Town. Unskilled and casual labour support them, for the most part—work demanding little more than a brawny arm and square pair of shoulders. That is a true London proverb, that poverty and gasworks go together. Those unsightly establishments employ large numbers of Irishmen, and the managers complain of their unfitness for work on Monday mornings. The railways, too, especially the lines running southwards, have many Irishmen in their pay, and superintendents have told us that for a few hours' exertion at high pressure Irish navvies have no superiors. But they revolt

against a long monotonous job. When the Tower Bridge was a-building, many Irish Londoners were engaged at the outset. They soon fell off by scores, and were replaced by steadier men from the north of England, who were found to be quite a third more productive week by week. The fault is not entirely the Irish labourer's, because nowhere in the world does the frequent demand for extra hands act as such an alluring excuse for spells of leisure, spent at public-house corners, as in London. Still the applicants for employment are too frequently of that nationality,—whenever it is a question, for example, of a little road-repairing, with no prospect of a further engagement.

An uncertain occupation seems to exercise, indeed, a curious fascination over London Irishmen. Regular weekly wages present few charms to them; a speculative trade does. A typically Irish industry is that of the casual porters at Covent Garden market. At the height of the season they can earn £2 or even £3 a-week. During those two months or so they keep the most unconscionable hours, sustained sleep being regarded as superfluity, and their breath invariably carries with it a mellow suggestion of "stout and mild." In the winter they pick up a few shillings, unless they are lucky enough to be taken on as scene-shifters at the playhouses. Yet rents about Drury Lane

amount to 4s. and 4s. 6d. a-week for a single room, and such is the congestion—a state of affairs that will become ten times worse when the demolitions for the new street have swept the ancient rookeries away—that already the men have to come to their work from distant Notting Hill. How is this chronically recurrent financial crisis faced? By appropriating the earnings of their boys, the small urchins who howl halfpenny papers through the streets, or, oftener still, by making wife and daughters hand over what they realise by selling flowers. Whether in prosperity or adversity, a Covent Garden porter contrives to have the price of a half-pint or two about him. And here let us put in a word for that misunderstood class, the Irish flower-girls. They undeniably use the foulest language in their altercations with the police and each other; when the evil spirit seizes them they will sit fiercely swilling beer for hours together without the slightest perceptible enjoyment. Yet they patiently stand all day and in all weathers, after having been to the market for their flowers as early as six o'clock, and that often to see their earnings spent before their faces by a drunken crone of a mother or an idle lout of a husband. We have even known the case of a girl who adopted a waif from the streets, and paid regular instalments for its education in a Roman Catholic orphanage. Herself no scholar, she was much troubled, poor thing, lest the child should

come to despise her. And the charge of immorality, so often brought against flower-girls by philanthropists of other creeds, is a cruel libel. In their not unpathetic phrase they are "prudent" women. Gross speech, the result of a life that knows no privacy, disguises in many of them a genuine delicateness of character, and their traducers judge by appearances. Ignorant of housewifery—for the majority can barely cook a red-herring—they preserve, nevertheless, a cleanliness of person—their poverty-stricken appearance in the streets being contrived to attract custom—and a tidy home. They discuss, moreover, the various "missions" that are concerned with their regeneration in a refreshing spirit of patronising cynicism.

The retail vegetable trade, in its various forms, has passed largely into the hands of the London Irish, though the Jews compete keenly with them. So far as small fruit- and vegetable-shops go, indeed, that tenacious race has secured the pick of working-class custom. Their rivals affect rather the open-air business, whether conducted on the peregrinating coster's cart, or on the rough street-stalls that do such a roaring trade in the poorest quarters on Saturday nights and Sunday mornings. Old residents in the East End have told us that this marketing used to be almost entirely in the hands of Essex people, who brought the stuff up from the country. Nowadays, however, your typical coster is your London Irishman, and he

has the genius of his industry. His nimble wit will anticipate his customer's wants; his ready tongue will wheedle her into the purchase of those "relishes" dear to the feminine palate—the spring onion or the radish. He does not mind bawling leather-lunged for hours together, since he has the zest of the bargain and the intellectual delights of repartee to keep him going. The daily stock does not require a large outlay; in dull times it retires for the night under the family bed, and is "sweetened" next morning with sprinkled water into a state of spurious freshness. Altogether, a hard-working set of fellows in a desultory way, and hard-living as well. The very uncertainty of their earnings makes them regard saving as a vice. A prosperous week means, too often, a Saturday spent in "booze"—the very day on which they should be making most money. With all their faults, the Irish coster class are a necessity to working-class London, and public opinion sides with them in their constant differences of opinion with the police. Their trading instincts, for one thing, take so many forms. Thus the domestic industry of haddock-smoking is Irish, and very Irish at that. Out go the head and intestines of the fish through the doorway in defiance of sanitary inspection, or they rot several feet high in the back-yard. Of Irish-cured fish, as of Irish-purveyed vegetables, it may be said without libel that the customer should not inquire too closely into their preparation for table.

The homes of these Irish costers vary with their ability to withstand the allurements of the public-house. A family of sots will live in the most decrepit slums of Bethnal Green or the bad quarter near Tabard Street on the Surrey side. The water stands for days in the un-repaired roadway; the tottering two-storeyed houses have been stripped bare of woodwork—whole stairs being sometimes torn away. The one room to the family contains barely a stick of furniture—merely some sacking in a corner, and that swarming with vermin. The poor little children will moan with discomfort through their sleep in the hot summer nights. That is an Irish coster family at its worst. The drunken husband makes some pretence at going round with his barrow; the drunken wife may make a few pence at a wheel-stall, but they never reach home; the children frequently have to keep themselves by scouring the country near London for chickweed and groundsel. But if the coster is a man of occasional bouts, not a confirmed toper, he will contrive to keep a fairly water-tight roof above his head, even if the donkey has to come out through the front door, and he is often housed in some of the cheaper model dwellings. In illness, or under the stroke of misfortune,—such as the death of his moke,—he can always appeal, and not in vain, to the charity of his Irish neighbours. The recognised form of public subvention is through a public-house concert or “friendly

lead,” with the local hero in the chair. It is most delicately done. On entering the room you advance to shake hands with the chairman. On the table before him lie two plates, the top one reversed on the other, and on its bottom a coin—a shilling, or it may be a florin. That is the standard of good-fellowship you are expected to attain. Being prepared for the emergency, you slip your equivalent dexterously between the plates and retire, leaving the admonitory token undisturbed. After that you sit for hours on a hard bench, “standing” pots of porter in your turn, and howling chorus after chorus of sentimental songs with your eyes shut. Thus has it been, no doubt, that Miss Kate Carney’s pathetic ditty, “Are we to part like this, Bill?” has been orally propagated through London, until every self-respecting errand-boy sings or whistles it.

The “friendly lead,” on occasions, serves purposes less innocent than the purchase of a new barrow. If a member of an Irish fraternity has “got into trouble,” it is summoned—usually under the more dignified title of a “meeting”—to provide funds for his defence. The social cohesiveness of the London Irish, on its worse sides, makes them a local nuisance, and even local dangers. A family will terrorise a whole wing of a “model,” rendering sleep impossible night after night. The niceties of etiquette make remonstrance with a drunken coster, whom it has pleased

to lock out his wife, a matter not to be lightly entered upon in any case. But the real deterrent is the knowledge that he and his intimates will lie in wait some dark evening and "pay" the supporters of law and order. Miss Octavia Hill, who knows the life of London courts and "models" well, has deplored the ascendancy which the rowdy few attain over the supine many, and confesses herself unable to point out a radical remedy for it. Out of doors this Irish clannishness takes in some neighbourhoods the form of Hooliganism—real Hooliganism, that is, not the mere hobbledehoy love of mischief that passes for such. While timid tradesmen have been unnecessarily scared into the belief that all London is liable to invasion by hordes of young ruffians, the Surrey side undeniably witnesses the periodical formation of dangerous bands, known to the police as Patsey's or Dan So-and-so's "gang," to their victims as Patsey's or Dan's "lot." We cannot pretend to Mr Clarence Rook's unrivalled acquaintance with Hooliganism, yet a Hooligan we have reckoned among our acquaintance. A typical London Irishman, coster, driver of a van, keeper of a tobacconist's shop—a very brief experience that—and potboy by turns, he excelled, too, as a remarkably clever light-weight boxer. The attractions of the ring ruined him, and we believe him to be still in prison on a heavy sentence for house-breaking.

For the study of the London Irish in the mass the docks are the happiest ground—not, however, that their characteristics differ materially from those observable in the Borough or the purlieu of Westminster Abbey. But they form the most permanent element in that class of labour, since Englishmen drift into it from other occupations, whereas many Irish families have gained their livelihood on the riverside for generations. The whole of the Tower Hamlets is thickly populated by them. They are being ousted by the Jews from St George's-in-the-East, despite such forcible arguments as broken Semitic windows. But Wapping has a solidly Irish quarter; so has Limehouse, between Commercial Road and the Thames, with an odd Italian colony living in fair amity; so has Poplar. If the river-side industries are taken together—some of them, such as hog-head making, being, unfortunately, on the rapid decline—they must account for quite a fourth of the employed. And full seventy per cent of them are London-born, the descendants of immigrants driven over by the Famine of 1846. As boys they will perhaps clean boilers, whence they emerge covered with a shining grime. In manhood they daily handle wealth that is not theirs, packing, sorting, and repacking. To the unpenetrating glance they do not differ widely from the common casual labourer. Their homes are a trifle more untidy, and they almost seem to resent repairs as an insult. If a land-

lord wishes to improve the condition of his tenements, his only chance comes when the family have gone hop-picking into Kent, as many docker families will. The soft accents of the brogue are seldom sounded, except by the old people, who cling tenaciously to everything Irish. We have heard, for example, of a wake celebrated in Poplar, at which some supreme humorist thrust snuff into the corpse's nose, quite in the old Lover temper. But the younger generations only cherish a vapidly sentimental affection for the land of their origin, and have quite lost its bewraying speech. Some of them have, curiously enough, a difficulty with the *th* ("the" being corrupted into "te" or "de"), which makes their dialect not unlike that wonderful jargon which Farquhar the dramatist put into the mouths of his Popish priests. Is it a reversion? The dark Milesian type and the grey Irish eye please you, at any rate, while you loiter about the docks. Nor have we even been able to detect that physical degeneration that sinister investigators of city life profess to discover. The grandchildren are shorter in stature than the first immigrants, perhaps, but sturdy, stout-limbed, and broad-chested.

The docks have been so often represented by Socialist grievance-mongers as illustrative of supreme capitalist tyranny, that the real state of affairs needs dispassionate statement. They employ, to begin with, several kinds of labour. The

stevedores are a compact body of men, largely Irish, who form a river-side aristocracy. Care being required to load a ship, they command high wages, amounting in a good year to £2 a-week; and they have formed a strong union for the protection of their interests. It will be remembered that they joined the dockers' strike of 1889 "from sympathy"; but the longer-headed among them have since confessed to the unwisdom of that sentimental proceeding. The coal-whippers also contain a strong Irish element, and their wages work out at some 25s. a-week. Even among the dockers themselves—men who require no more knack than the lifting and carrying an accustomed kind of load, or sorting and counting—three grades obtain, though the system varies with the different companies. There are the permanent hands, the "preference" labourers, and the casuals. The first make their 25s. a-week, and so count above the very poor. Though the Irish congregate together, whereas the English like to live away from their work, the steadier of them are to be found in model dwellings, their wives bringing home a few shillings by East-End tailoring work. The "preference" or "ticket" men will earn from 15s. to 20s. a-week, and in good years they are seldom out of employment for many weeks in the twelvemonth. Compulsory idleness demoralises, no doubt; but is it confined to the river-side? If the twelvemonth were calculated

out, a bricklayer would be discovered to have been out of employment much longer than the irregular hands at the London and St Katherine or East and West India Docks, if they have any kind of a character. And since the exaggerated odium which the strike brought upon them, the companies have honestly tried, so far as the uncertainties of steam navigation will permit, to level up the "preference" men and the better class of casuals.

For there are casuals and casuals. The dock strike gave them their "tanner" or sixpence an hour, of which the public heard so much, but did not attract trade. Mr Douglas Owen, who speaks with authority, holds, indeed, that the immense relative increase since that date in tonnage cleared at Hamburg, Rotterdam, and Antwerp is conceivably due to the disquieting effect of that much-advertised movement. The more modern accommodation and the easier access provided by those ports may have much to do with their success at our expense; but that by the way. We are trying to convey some idea of the dense population, quite 12,000 strong, which lives by casual labour at the London docks. The friend of humanity will yearn to know if they have the means of bare subsistence. Our unhesitating reply to him is that, whatever Trade Union officials may asseverate, they have; and a little, though not much, more. A casual docker of moderate

strength and the rudiments of applicability can make from 8s. to 10s. or even 12s. a-week, out of which he has to pay away 4s. for his one-room lodging. The margin is barely perceptible, when a wife and several children come into the calculation, but it exists. Such are the finances of hundreds of Irish families in the East End. If the men would submit to the rigidity of the six-to-six hours, if they would condescend to work overtime, they might rise to permanent employment. But they prefer the short bustling job, followed by lordly ease, which they often spend, for days together, in bed. So as casuals they live, and as casuals they die.

Dock foremen make a broad distinction between native-born and Cockney Irish, to the disadvantage of the latter. A docker newly arrived from County Cork will discharge five tons against the one of the grandson of the immigrant of '46. The Thames air seems, somehow, to blight them between the critical ages of eighteen and two-or three-and-twenty. Lord Salisbury once drew an indiscreet parallel between the Irish and the Hottentots, which stirred the Nationalist press into paroxysms of rage. Without intending offence, we would point to this common feature in the Hibernian and negro idiosyncrasy, that a dull manhood follows upon a youth of the brightest promise. While teaching at a night-school in Poplar we were once approached by a shoeless urchin of ten with a request to be instructed in cube

root—an accomplishment that had long since deserted us. Undismayed by our frank confession of ignorance, he addressed his demand elsewhere, and refused to budge until he had mastered the mystery. At twenty the thirst for knowledge has quite forsaken the Irish Cockney, though the chances are that he has acquired a thirst of another kind. An occasional visit to the gallery of the Cambridge Music Hall, surreptitious games with greasy packs of cards in a derelict barge or a house condemned for demolition, and loafing up and down the street, cutty in mouth, comprise the sum of their interests. Cherishing a romantic regard for the green fields of Erin, they seldom visit Epping Forest, though it lies at their door. Acquaintance with a pugilist is a social distinction, and the fighting instinct in the blood betrays itself in the wild excitement with which they follow the fortunes of a contest with the gloves. More than one well-to-do member of the betting-ring, too, is of Irish extraction, and hails from beyond Aldgate. With their exception, however, we have never known a single instance of a London-born Irishman who has risen much above the condition of his parents. In the United States they become big contractors or Tammany "bosses": the latter an evil pre-eminence, but still a proof of push. Established in London, they give themselves over to an unstimulating discontent; the bright alacrity of their manner carries

with it no purpose of will; they are charming to the casual stranger, but they break their overseers' hearts.

The influence of the Roman Catholic Church on the docker population cannot be confidently defined in a sentence or two. Its hold on the women is certainly stronger than on the men, and the honour must be fairly divided between the Sisters and the Priests. An Irish girl has an alive sense of religion, and compares most favourably in point of morals with her English sister, who passes godlessly from the board school to the factory. They even submit to discipline in matters of dress: we have been told, for instance, that the substitution of the plain straw hat with a leather band for the wonderful edifice of ostrich feathers which used to be in fashion, is due to the thrifty advice of a much-respected Catholic lady who occupies herself with good works. The priests, too, exercise a remarkable control over their flocks up to a certain point. One of them used to rule his parish literally with a rod, carrying a stout cane under his cassock, which he would lay about the back of a btrly docker caught knocking his wife about. That same priest, by the way, boycotted a night-school attached to one of the university missions, and not an Irish boy dared show his nose inside the door ever after. They do not all of them affect such masterful methods: yet even in the most squalid slum they are sure of a touch of the cap; and, however recklessly

an Irishman may have lived, he seeks for the last offices of the Church on his deathbed. To one not of the Roman communion the jealous rigidity of that great organisation would appear to cramp its powers. An admirable priest was revered not long ago over a quarter of London, the roughest of the rough. He spent large sums of money on his church, for he was a man of means; deeply moved congregations hung on his lips; the sick implored his presence from afar. His reward was not promotion, but a command to betake himself to another cure, which amounted to an emphatic reduction in rank. And even if the authority of the Roman Catholic Church in externals be admitted, how much deeper does it go? Priests have sorrowfully admitted to us that they retain little real hold upon London Irishmen of the third generation, though they feel sure of the first and second. They lay the blame naturally upon the demoralising allurements of schism and free thought. We are not concerned to refute that charge in an essay that purports merely to summarise the observations of some twenty years on manners and livelihoods. Let us content ourselves with hazarding the remark, made in all honesty and charity, that the Church of Rome, considered as a director of conduct, falls a good deal short of its desires and its appearances throughout the Irish regions of London.

These London Irish are, in

truth, more secretive than Jews. We would wager that they have been systematically falsifying their census returns from fear of that mysterious abstraction "the inspector." Their political ideas would defy penetration, even if the astutest of revolutionary agents were to set about it. Every Irish boy is a sentimental Fenian, to whom the murder of Lord Frederick Cavendish and Mr Burke counts as an act of righteous retribution, with Joe Brady as its hero, and Tim Kelly as its innocent martyr. Revolutionary agents were, if Scotland Yard knew anything, buzzing viciously about the East End during the brave times of Mr Gladstone's Coercion Act and the dynamite scare, in addition to the few American desperadoes who came over to terrorise by explosives. But though much Fenian literature circulates in troublous years about the London docks, it may be questioned if it makes many serious converts. The organisers are understood to complain, in fact, that though the clubs will meet readily enough, no "stuff" (that is, money) is forthcoming—nothing but talk. Shortly before the outbreak of the war in South Africa a certain "General" Cox descended upon London from Chicago with the object of raising funds and men for the Boers: he went away without either. The London Irish dearly love playing at revolutionaries, but they are careful not to overdo the jest. An impressive muster can always be obtained for a

march with bands and banners to Hyde Park. Yet even the tearful eloquence of Mr William O'Brien or the frenzied appeals of Mr T. D. Sullivan to high heaven, when newly released from Kilmainham, used never to do more than gently tickle the listless sensibilities of their audiences. A grim old face or two will always be seen at these assemblages, on which are working the memories of '67 or earlier, when rebellion was really intended. What a contrast is that gnarled veteran to the besashed young docker in his Sunday clothes, who thoroughly enjoys the dignity of demonstration, but who only gives the most intermittent attention to its cause! And so it comes to this, that despite numbers, powers of combin-

ation, and identity of belief, the London Irish element among the working classes will not, so far as sane prediction goes, become actively anti-British, or be persuaded, indeed, to take more than a languid interest in politics. They will live apart, believing their country to be deeply wronged, but perceiving that schemes of vengeance had best remain unrealised. They even revisit Ireland but rarely, unlike the emigrants to the United States, and regularly drift back to London again. Theirs is a most voluntary exile; and in justice to them it must be admitted that they often dismiss the topic of Saxon tyranny with a most good-natured grin. No, they are not a White Peril.

MUSINGS WITHOUT METHOD.

LORD MILNER AND THE COUNTRY—THE VITUPERATION OF THE PRESS—
WORDS THAT CONVEY NO THOUGHT—THE DELEGATION OF AUTHORITY
—THE TREATMENT OF SIR BARTLE FRERE—THE CULT OF THE MIL-
LIONAIRE—THE BAYARD OF THE MONEY-BAG—THE DANGER OF
PHILANTHROPY—*PECUNIA OLET.*

THE dignified and cordial reception of Lord Milner has dispelled the fog of falsehood and invention. No more is said of dismissal. The most hopeful of the pro-Boers have ceased to chatter of an honourable degradation to a higher post, while the Peerage conferred upon the High Commissioner is a symbol of the trust reposed in him by the King, the Parliament, and the people. For once, at any rate, the English Government will support its chosen servant in loyal confidence. But while one falsehood is exposed, the detractors are as busy as ever. The return of Lord Milner being assured, they take refuge in other lies, and when lies fail them, there is always the simple expedient of vituperation. The High Commissioner is assailed day by day with an hysterical virulence, which is the highest certificate of honourable conduct. The Radicals have always reserved for unselfish and patriotic statesmen the rankest flowers of their rhetorical abuse, and it need not be said that Lord Milner has most happily inspired them. One paper there is, whose leader-writers need not have penned a single fresh article: they had but to change the

name, and the libels, consecrated to Sir Bartle Frere twenty years ago, would have suited the case of Lord Milner. "The enthusiasm which is felt for the High Commissioner is only too easily intelligible. He has allied himself with the worst passions and sinister motives of the colonists—their fear and hate of a race outnumbering their own; their desire for conquest and spoil, for the subjugation of their enemies, with the view of annexing their territory; and their disposition to sponge on the Empire, to prosecute their own gain at the cost of the mother country," &c., &c. Might not these words be written to-day as the Radicals' welcome to Lord Milner? Well, they were the tribute once paid to Sir Bartle Frere, and their falsehood was long since demonstrated by history. But unhappily for their own intelligence, the Radicals opposed Sir Bartle, because he would not permit the Zulus to destroy the white population, Boer and English alike. To-day the same Radicals, in the same empty press, with the same meaningless anger, attack Lord Milner, because he would restrain the Boers from flogging their friends of twenty years ago. Thus they have done violence

to all their principles save one. Radicals, they applaud corrupt monopolies; despite their pretended jealousy of popular rights, they have chosen for their hero a narrow oligarch; the champions of liberty, they are on the side of those who deem slavery a natural right. Yet one principle they never violate: they are constant in the hatred they bear to their country. Cannibalism, indeed, has been and will ever be the mark of the Radical. He is always hungry to make a meal of the mother who bore him, and perhaps a solitary flash of justice sees in his own birth a crime that needs punishment. No sooner is an attack made upon England than the Radical finds a fresh friend. He is prepared to forget his principles at a moment's warning, and for Kruger's sake he willingly denounces an extended franchise as the instrument of tyranny. Now, the politician of this sort is bitten by words, as by gadflies; he is stung to fury by a phrase, and knowing naught of the antidote of facts, he lets the poison course idly through his swollen veins. He proudly calls himself a "man of ideas," because he is quick at borrowed formulæ, and he is as careless about the consequence of his phrases as were the revolutionaries of 1793, who believed that all heads fell justly, if they fell to the murmur of *égalité*, or as are the anarchists of to-day, who justify dynamite or the knife by a tag from Darwin.

Behind the flood of words

poured forth by the enemies of their country, there is, then, neither thought nor knowledge, and the false phrases of twenty years ago are no more and no less appropriate than those more recently coined. But one charge has been brought against Lord Milner which we believe Sir Bartle Frere escaped. It has been thrown in the High Commissioner's teeth that he is "one-sided"; and truly he is "one-sided," if it be "one-sided" to support his country's cause. With whom, indeed, should a high official sympathise if not with the country whose cause he is sent to advocate? And the grotesqueness of this charge is the best proof of Radical frivolity. No doubt if the moribund party of Mr John Morley had been permitted to settle the Boer question, the last demands of Mr Kruger would have been granted to-day, as they were granted in 1881, when the murderers of Englishmen either were not tried at all, or were brought before such tribunals as assured their acquittal. But Mr John Morley is not likely to be admitted to the councils of the nation for many years to come, and his speeches cannot have any other than an academic interest. Yet it is curious to note that the party which purports to be led by the biographer of Cromwell would have Lord Milner recalled in disgrace because he is not the favourite of General Botha; nor have vanity and a receding chin ever carried politicians farther along the road

of concession. A conquered foe, in their opinion, has not only the right to impose terms upon the victor; he has also the right to cancel any appointment which is displeasing to him. Thus if the French in 1759 had demanded the degradation of Pitt, or if Napoleon had suggested the suppression of Nelson and Wellington, the Radicals of the time would, we suppose, have been justified in a placid acquiescence.

So much for the poisoned arrows which have been directed at Lord Milner. They cannot touch him, because they are aimed by trembling hands far from the target. Moreover, it is clear that the British Government is prepared to support and protect its Commissioner. The confidence of the country is assured; and this is the most hopeful sign, for not only does Lord Milner deserve all our trust, but it shows that in the future a better system of government may prevail. Truly, Lord Milner is a public servant of whom any nation might be proud. Trained in the best traditions, he played his part in the regeneration of Egypt, whose solvency is due in no small measure to his loyal co-operation. Yet whatever may have been his position before he accepted the difficult post of High Commissioner, he has enormously enhanced it since the Bloemfontein Conference. That the Boers should dislike him is natural, since he resolutely refused to be hoodwinked by the conditional

promises of Paul Kruger. There was only one possible method of securing protection for "a large, wealthy, and industrious community of white men," long subjected to insult and aggression, and that method was a liberal franchise. This method, which even our amicable cannibals might describe as moderate, was declined by the Boers, although, as Lord Milner declared, "the policy of her Majesty's Government had been one of singular patience."

"It seemed best," said the High Commissioner, "to strike straight at the root of the evil by giving the people whose interest her Majesty's Government is bound to defend such a share of political power as would enable them gradually to redress those grievances themselves, and to strengthen, not to weaken, the country of their adoption in the process. But just because I was relying on a single remedy, it was absolutely essential that that remedy should be a radical one. It was useless, indeed, worse than useless, and would only have led to worse trouble later on to have accepted a scheme so framed—I do not say so designed—as not to bring people in, but to keep them out; a scheme hedged in with restrictions of the most elaborate kind, and hampered with a condition which I knew that numbers of people would never accept, and which one could not reasonably urge them to accept."

Could any pronouncement be more moderate than that? It was the bounden duty of the High Commissioner and of England to protect Britons against the insults and injuries daily put upon them. Yet so desirous was Lord Milner of a pacific solution that he would have accepted on behalf of his countrymen such a franchise as

is granted elsewhere without exaction. Indeed, the quality which shines most strongly in Lord Milner's speeches and despatches is an amiable moderation; nor did he recommend "prompt and decided action" until he saw—and none had a better opportunity of vision—that the negotiations had been contrived for failure from the first. But for so many years have the Boers been used to the tergiversation of English Ministers, that perhaps they did not believe in Lord Milner's resolution. Educated in the Gladstonian principle of government, that it is always right for Englishmen to give away what does not belong to them, the friends of Kruger thought that if the screw were turned tight enough they might still pursue their policy of monopoly and intimidation. But at last there came a Minister who, with the support of his Government, declared that Englishmen should not be degraded to the state of helots, and who, when peace was insolently refused, did not shrink from the last sacrifice of war. For this he is called "the author of anarchy" and the enemy of his country by Mr Frederic Harrison. The compliment is delicately paid and well deserved. It is a distinction, indeed, to incur the hatred of a hysterical Positivist, who has spoken much in his life of "scientific" thought, and has so carelessly lost the sense of words that he writes like a larrikin.

But while we congratulate Lord Milner on gaining the

public confidence, which is his due, we congratulate ourselves as heartily upon this admirable trust. For in the support of our High Commissioner a sound and serious principle is involved. If the British Empire is not to perish in the triumph of Little Englandism, the empire's responsible officials must be loyally respected. When once a Government has made an appointment it must support its action. Authority must be delegated, or our empire will crumble away in ignorance and forgetfulness. The most brilliant Minister cannot know all things, and he can only be brilliantly served on one condition—that he believes in the intelligence of his servants. If a governor is no more than a transmitter of telegrams, if opinions securely formed upon the spot are to be revised by the prejudices of Downing Street or the exigencies of the polling-booth, then the Government must be content with the services of the second-rate. And as the science of government is empirical at the best, it is most necessary that our Ministers should be well informed at home and ably served abroad. The history of South Africa is a history of wilful ignorance and blank distrust. Ministers of either side have treated what may be our richest province with a reckless contempt. They have appointed governors and recalled them with a levity which it is not pleasant to contemplate, and they have traitorously thrown overboard the most faithful servants, that the ship of party might lighten

its load. When we contrast the treatment meted out to Lord Milner with the insults put upon Sir Bartle Frere, we may take a just pride in our newer method of politics. For, in truth, the sacrifice of Sir Bartle Frere is among the most painful episodes of our history: it was not merely a patent disloyalty to a great public servant, but it involved the country in an endless waste of blood and treasure. All that we have endured since of insolence and warfare was foreseen by Sir Bartle, and might have been prevented. But the home Government knew but little of Africa, and was so busy opposing the stampedes of Mr Gladstone, that it faced colonial questions with a lamentable apathy. Now, Frere had gone to Africa at the earnest request of the Government; he had been implored to achieve the federation of our African colonies. It was a delicate task, which could only be performed by a statesman who had the perfect trust and support of his countrymen. Yet no sooner did an election seem imminent than Sir Bartle was made the victim of popular clamour. The insolence of the Radical press, directed against a man who preferred action to formulæ, was quite proper and never unexpected. But Sir Michael Hicks Beach at any rate might have refused to bend to the storm. However, the battle of Isandhlwana seemed at home a monstrous disaster, and many who knew naught of the policy which Frere had initiated saw in the battle nothing save a

reckless waste of life. A majority of the Cabinet detected a definite profit to themselves in a censure of their Commissioner, and though Lord Beaconsfield supported Frere with his great influence, he could arrive at nothing better than a compromise. Frere was publicly censured, and implored in the same breath not to desert his post. For sheer cowardice it would be difficult to match this conduct, and the correspondence between Frere and his persecutors is not pleasant reading. Even when Frere defended himself in an admirable despatch, the Colonial Minister grumbled, and did not understand why Frere should take notice of any attacks. Sir Bartle's answer is dignified and conclusive. "Your warning is a kind one," he wrote, "Why raise a fresh storm by replying to the Opposition?" Simply because, finding no complete and formal reply had been made to them, I wish to place one on record." The reproof, so lightly given, was heavy enough to inflict a wound upon the most complacent of Ministers, yet the Government, always protesting complete confidence in Frere, were as yet on the threshold of disloyalty.

Before the censure was published, Frere had done much to win the help and sympathy of the Boers. Disgraced by his Government, he could not expect to retain the support of those cunning politicians. But the Colonial Minister was not yet satisfied with his work. Having already censured Frere, he thought it politic partially to

supersede him. Accordingly Sir Garnet Wolseley was sent to replace him as High Commissioner of the Transvaal, Natal, and all the adjoining eastern portion of East Africa. The result of this divided control could have been easily foretold. The work, for whose accomplishment Frere had gone to Africa, became impossible. The Boers, alternately repressed and encouraged, patiently prepared Majuba, and when Sir George Colley took Sir Garnet's place, the worst was assured. Mr Gladstone went upon the stump, Mid-Lothian was aroused by his rhetorical falsehood, and the fate of Frere and South Africa was sealed. Who, indeed, could stand against such facile falsehood as the famous description of the Zulu war: "The record of ten thousand Zulus slain for no other offence than their attempt to defend against your artillery with their naked bodies their hearths and homes, their wives and families"? Mr Gladstone, of course, came into office, and the recall of Sir Bartle was a natural part of the Radical policy. The Radical party has always been notorious for a callousness unknown even to the criminal classes, yet never was a more callous document penned than the petition addressed to Mr Gladstone urging Sir Bartle's recall. Not one word of this precious poltroonery should be lost, and we quote it word for word: "We, the undersigned, members of the Liberal party, respectfully submit that as there is a strong feeling throughout the country in favour of the recall of Sir

Bartle Frere, it would greatly conduce to the unity of the party, and relieve many members from the charge of breaking their pledges to their constituents, if that step were taken." Here, it will be noted, is no word of England or of Africa. The empire was nothing to these earnest Liberals compared to the Unity of the Party. Honour and justice were cheerfully sacrificed that members "might be relieved from the charge of breaking their pledges." Maybe they were relieved of this charge; they incurred another, from whose incubus they will never be free. The follies of party government generally hide themselves under a mask of patriotism. Here the mask is ruthlessly torn aside, and the unmasked politician confesses that the sky may fall, and justice with it, if only the Unity of the Liberal Party be assured.

Thus Sir Bartle Frere was sacrificed to the election pledge of Mr Leonard Courtney, and doubtless that eminent casuist is proud to have been saved from breaking a profitable promise. The way was made plain for Mr Gladstone's surrender, and a quarter of a century of strife was imposed upon the country. Only the unity of the Liberal party has proved transient, and it may still be doubted whether so monstrous a disloyalty was repaid by the off-chance of preventing a quarrel between Sir William Harcourt (let us say) and Mr Campbell-Bannerman. However, the lesson of Sir Bartle's career has not been taught

in vain. That injured politician had no compensation save the certainty, often expressed, that time would prove the justice of his policy, and the proof is already conclusive. But the lesson has had a sternly practical result. For many years to come the Government will remember that it owes something to the servants who loyally fight its battles. While Sir Bartle suffered, Lord Milner is strengthened by the suffering of his predecessor; and the Government, which has supported him in the stress of the past year, will send him back to Africa fortified against the attacks of traitors, and encouraged to undertake the more difficult task which lies before him.

But all things, including politics, have been overshadowed of late by a new cult—the cult of the millionaire. In the worship of money even Lord Milner's prowess may be forgotten, and Mr Pierpont Morgan may appear more important than the settlement of the South African question. For there is no doubt that the millionaire has had what they call in France a *belle presse*. It is impossible to pick up a newspaper without finding therein eloquent descriptions of his splendid state. Now you are told how he has purchased himself a railway-car at the modest cost of £10,000, and your blood runs cold when you think of his vulgar orgie of marble and silver. Now, the gasping journalist tells you, with an air of panic-stricken awe, that on a

certain occasion one simple roof was privileged to cover a dozen heroes, whose joint fortunes amounted to x millions. The poorest jest, made by a new-sewn money-bag, is printed with an exaggerated respect, and if the money-bag deigns to consider the arts, his taste is estimated not by its result but by the dollars which encourage it. In fact, the golden calf is set up, and the devout hustle about it with a frank and noisy reverence. It is not a noble spectacle, but it is universal; and the millionaire, who tears across the Atlantic to attend a dinner, appears to be the Bayard of the future.

The people has worshipped many false gods in the past, and much incense has been burned upon unworthy altars. Yet the glory of the millionaire is the loudest confession ever made that discrimination is dead. Once upon a time men were esteemed for courage, for virtue, for prowess in the field of war or sport. Feudalism, no doubt, had its hardships; but in spite of injustice it was the realisation of a generous dream. And when feudalism died with the gradual growth of new ideas, merit or tradition was still esteemed even by the humble. A man ruled his country because the associations of his birth or the elevation of his intellect made him fit for leadership. Riches availed him little enough in winning either the favour of a king or the support of the people. But the old ideals are dead or dying, and money seems to the idle mind of to-

day the easiest method of differentiation. So we are confronted with a new heroism—the heroism of money-bags. He who has swept together the largest heap of rubble may easily be known for the greatest man; and since the value of dollars is not enhanced by judicious manners or wise distribution, the problem of merit is easily solved.

What is the millionaire, then, the new ruler of the world? If he constitute a class by himself, he may best be defined as a man of narrow intelligence, who has mistaken the means of life for the end. His wealth argues a wasted life—a youth spent in avarice, a manhood devoted to the vain collection of immaterial gold. For the millionaire piles up his millions, not for any pleasure they may afford him, but for the sheer joy which is confessed by a swollen balance. When he has got enough to amuse or instruct himself and his family he is not content. It is a point of honour with him to go on hoarding, hoarding. So he gathers sovereigns, or dollars, as the savage collects cowries, and he seldom remembers that wealth may buy happiness. Indeed, the very conditions of his life ensure a sort of misery, since he cannot pause to laugh or to take breath. He who goes not forward must necessarily go back—so we have been told by an expert; and a fall in his profits too often suggests to the millionaire the cold walls of the poorhouse. So the poor fellow works and works, until no gift remains to him save the gift of

Midas. Whatever he touches is transmuted to gold; but the gaiety, the interest, the taste which alone give a proper value to gold are not his: he shivers in front of a hospitable fire; he starves at a well-laden table.

In truth, we might almost find it in our heart to pity him, did not his conscious arrogance render pity absurd, for his industry brings him few rewards, beyond the admiring fame of the daily paper. Of course he can purchase more champagne than his fellows; of course he can enlarge his racing-stable, until it includes all the horses not already purchased by rival millionaires. Of course, also, he may buy books, and pictures, and houses; but the excitement of the genuine collector is not for him. In the first place, a life spent in dollar-hunting is not the best training for the amateur; and in the second, the millionaire can if he choose, and he generally chooses, buy his collections ready-made. A book or a picture that has caused no sacrifice and entailed no forethought cannot have the same value as a book or a picture that has been feverishly watched and bought with coins that are hardly spared. And the millionaire can have so much that he never knows the full pleasure of possession. This conclusion, arrived at by first principles, is supported by eminent examples. An American has recently purchased a whole gallery of pictures, which, while they represent his dollars, represent somebody else's taste. Another can see no better use

for his money than the acquisition of the stolen Gainsborough, whose curious career has wholly obscured its artistic insignificance. But though they spend vast sums of money, these millionaires cannot be called collectors; they are too busy to select, and the inevitable dispersal of their libraries and cabinets will cause us no regret. A millionaire might easily have bought the Ashburnham Library. But it would have still remained the Ashburnham Library, however far it travelled, and whatever name was signed at the bottom of the cheque which paid for it.

One wealthy manufacturer, however, has loyally supported his class, and has stated in print that the rich man is the first necessity of civilisation. "It is well, nay, essential," says Mr Carnegie, "for the progress of the race that the houses of some should be homes for all that is highest and best in literature and the arts. . . . Without wealth there can be no Mæcenas. The 'good old times' were not good old times." It would be impossible to crowd more fallacies into a single sentence. It is very well that there should be "homes" for the best in literature and the arts, yet the arts have not yet been driven to take asylum in the houses of millionaires, who are not always fitted by education and sentiment for the delicate office of patron. Again, it is quite true that "without wealth there can be no Mæcenas." But the good old times were so very good, that Mæcenas belonged to

them, and that with their decay the dignified system of patronage died also. A poet could accept the protection of a great noble or of a distinguished Minister without losing his esteem or hurting his pride. And in "the good old days" the relation of patron to poet was perfectly well understood. But no poet would choose to be patronised by the head of a trust, and all the wealth of all the millionaires will never achieve so much for literature as was achieved in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries by the slender competence of an English noble. Finished steel may be sold in America for two cents a pound—this at least has been accomplished by the wealthy merchants. Yet many a trust will be dissolved in penury before the iron mines of the New World produce a single Mæcenas.

For Mæcenas was descended, as we learned at school, *regibus atavis*, and the habit of a lifetime, inspired by a line of kings, enabled him to claim Horace for his friend. And there is this profound difference between the "good old times" and to-day, which the millionaires are apt to overlook: in the good old times wealth carried with it a heavy responsibility. The feudal lord accepted with his lands a solemn trust. He was the father of his people; he was the captain of soldiers, whom he equipped to fight for his king and country. So that there was always a dignified charge upon his property, which he could neither sell nor give away. His house was at once a

stronghold and a refuge: while he protected his tenants and servants against attack, he opened his door to honoured merit. Those who accepted his patronage took what was theirs by right of custom, and he received the adulation of poets in the proper spirit of smiling appreciation. But industrialism rudely interrupted this Arcadian life long since, and, instead of "the good old times," we are witnesses to-day of wealth without responsibility, of philanthropy without control.

When, therefore, a millionaire tells us that money may make a Mæcenæ, he gravely misrepresents the duty of a patron, and shows himself deficient in the sense of humour. But humour is the quality which millionaires most conspicuously lack. Worse than all, they are wont to take themselves mighty seriously, and to believe that they hold their money in trust to some unseen power—to the spirit of wealth perhaps. The very best of them have a touch of Trimalchio in their nature. Of course they could not rise to Trimalchio's height and ask, What is a poor man? But they verily believe that a poor man is fashioned of another clay than that fine substance of which they are made. They look about them and recognise that millionaires are not too common in the world. And this rarity persuades them that wealth is an almost holy endowment. But they forget that it is as often lack of will as lack of ability which keeps men from amassing large fortunes. There are other, and

more profitable, methods of spending the time than collecting pieces of gold, nor can we believe that the ability necessary to piling up money is of the highest kind. Temperament, of course, counts for much. The hawk is proud of his beak, as the nightingale of his song. And it would be unreasonable to expect modesty in a millionaire, who believes, no doubt, that the stronger the claw the better the man. At any rate, this belief helps to explain the serious view which the rich man takes of himself and of his mission. For now and again he claims to have a mission, and it is then that he becomes a danger to the State.

For the millionaire does not hesitate to benefit his fellow-men; and in his worst incarnation he thinks that he has a right to offer the people the last insult by way of gift. But philanthropy, when it is not supported by an unselfish intelligence, is an unmixed evil, which should be regarded with a scrupulous suspicion. The first duty of the community is to look every gift-horse in the mouth: a millionaire may present a million which he will not miss in all levity of heart, and the harm may be done before the consequences are perceived. That a private citizen should have thought it possible even for a moment to free the education of a great country should awaken us to the perils of benevolence. Mr Carnegie is, we believe, a firm opponent of Socialism, yet the accident of wealth might have enabled him to achieve the worst results of

a system which he despises. If it be wrong to accept aid from the Government, it is wrong also to accept that aid from a private philanthropist; indeed, we would always rather be beholden to the State than to the generosity of a wealthy citizen. But happily the mouth of Mr Carnegie's gift-horse has been thoroughly examined, and a vast sum of money will now be wisely spent upon Scottish education. Yet because the trustees in whom the money is vested are likely to administer it well, we need not forget Scotland's narrow escape from pauperisation. To grant a university education free to all comers was a scheme not only impracticable but perilous. Privileges that cost nothing are little worth, and Scotland is strong among the nations because she has won the advantages of education by strength of character and the sacrifice of self. However, it remains with the trustees to formulate a scheme, and at least the public right of criticising a gift is amply vindicated.

But there is another reason why money should not be accepted without examination. As often as not it is not too honourably come by. *Pecunia non olet*, says the old proverb, and nothing could be falsier. Money never loses its scent. We should be very sorry if

the rook were permitted first of all to pluck the pigeon and then to comfort his disfeathered frame with a pension. Nor are the new methods such as to inspire us with confidence. Once upon a time the marauder went upon the pad, and levied his tax upon the stage-coach. Now he goes into the city and sits upon the board of bogus companies. The greed of the pigeon, who, wishing to gain cent per cent without risk, deserves no pity, is well matched by the cunning of the rook; and the rook, when his competence is assured, seeks to buy respectability with a subscription. But the community should so jealously guard its independence as to reject this specious bargain. No nation needs the help of the bogus-company promoter, or of the monstrous speculator who, to corner corn, imposes a famine upon a harmless population, and who condemns his compatriots to thirst by sending up the price of ice. After all, the indiscriminate collection of sovereigns is not in itself a virtuous action, and while the popular admiration of millionaires is merely an expression of vulgarity, the ready acceptance of their doles might prove a national disgrace. Not all who have may give, and the rare privilege of generosity, assumed in fear, should be exercised with all the carefulness of a humble spirit.

WAR OFFICE ORGANISATION.

MR CLINTON DAWKINS and the members of the Committee appointed to consider and report on certain matters relating to War Office organisation are to be congratulated on the success of their labours and the account of their stewardship which they have given to Parliament and the public. They had a difficult and delicate task to perform, and they have performed it with tact and skill, and in a reasonable time. They first met on January 8, held thirty-seven sittings, and their report is dated May 9. Unlike other committees and commissions, they have not allowed themselves to be buried under a mass of detail, and they have not, through bureaucratic or literary vanity, attempted the task of compiling a cyclopædia. The report of the War Office Committee should by command be made a model for the report of future commissions. In this document we find no theories propounded, but facts recorded and deductions drawn from them. The deductions are given in a modest manner, and whether one agrees with a conclusion or not, it is impossible not to feel that the conclusion has been reached by men who have striven to form an impartial opinion. The report will no doubt be criticised, and there is room for criticism; but sensible and moderate men must acknowledge that if the recommendations of the Committee are fairly carried into

execution, a great advance will have been made towards giving England what she has so long needed—a real War Department. The recommendations made are not those of theorists, but of men conversant with affairs, who have founded their opinion on the evidence of experts. The Committee wisely decided not only to ascertain the opinion of experienced administrators acquainted with the duties of the War Office, but inquiries were addressed to a number of general officers upon that crucial point, the possibility of further decentralisation. They also obtained information from railway companies, from important manufacturing companies, and from large co-operative societies, with reference to their business procedure, and more particularly as to the methods adopted by them in making purchases and contracts and in dealing with contractors. The Committee, and individual members of it, gathered further evidence on the subject of contracts from representatives of great manufacturing and business firms, but on the understanding that such evidence should be regarded as confidential. The Committee visited the Arsenal at Woolwich and took evidence on the spot from the Woolwich officials, while individual members visited the Ordnance factories and the headquarters of certain military districts. Among those who appeared

before the Committee, some of them on more than one occasion, were the Adjutant-General, the Inspector-General of Fortifications, the Director-General of Ordnance, the Quartermaster-General, the Military Secretary, the Permanent Under-Secretary of State, the Accountant-General, and the Director of Army Contracts, as well as Lord Haldiburton (late Permanent Under-Secretary of State), and the following general officers commanding districts: General H.R.H. the Duke of Connaught, General Sir Redvers Buller, Lieutenant-General Sir William Butler, Major-General Sir J. F. Maurice, Major-General L. V. Swaine, and Major-General Sir T. Fraser. The financial relations between the War Office and the Treasury, and the procedure with regard to contracts followed at the Admiralty, were explained by representatives of those departments.

The evidence of all the witnesses has been recorded, and these authentic materials give a general picture, gloomy, it may be, though of ghastly veracity none can deny, of the administration of so vital a concern as the War Department of England at the present day. The evidence proves to the hilt that the Committee has not been too severe in their sweeping condemnation of a department whose methods of conducting business are shown to be devoid of the elementary principles of administration. The organisation of the War Office might well

have been described by a single word — disorganisation. In entering upon their labours the Committee were confronted by the terms of the reference, which made their inquiry *subject to the general distribution of responsibilities laid down by the Order in Council of 7th March 1899*. "This limitation precluded," the Committee state, "the consideration of any organic changes in the constitution of the War Office." In plain speech, the Committee were precluded from going to the root of the subject submitted to it. The chairman and his colleagues, therefore, deserve much credit for the skill with which they surmounted the stumbling-block placed in their path. "The arrangement of the matter of the report," they write, "has been somewhat complicated by the overlapping of the subjects covered by the reference. The Committee have, therefore, thought it advisable, in the first place, to state the general impressions to which their inquiries have led, to set forth existing defects, and to lay down principles of administration which need to be applied to the War Office." They have so moulded their general impressions and set forth the existing defects that they have clearly shown that there is practically no distribution of real authority, although there is a nominal division of authority between different high officials.

With regard to the War Office, the Government is in the position of a horticulturist who,

in making successive additions to his garden, finds himself hampered at every step because he did not originally start with some definite plan. The creation of the War Office was a crude and hasty attempt made many years ago to bring various departments into one organic whole. The Accountant-General, the Master of the Ordnance, the Secretary-at-War, and the Commander-in-Chief each supplied a contingent of clerks, who were gathered into a building utterly unsuited for the purpose, and it was called the War Office. After the discussion of fifty years no serious attempt has ever been made by a great statesman to lay down a definite scheme of military administration, no great administrator has ever attempted to mould the Office into a real military department. "The general structure of the War Office organisation," the Committee states, "has been built up piecemeal as the result of constant changes and compromises. Principles of administration and of business have been too frequently subordinated to temporary exigencies or to personal and political considerations." Thus, in place of becoming a compact machine working smoothly upon lines well conceived, like the military department in Germany or the military department in India, it has always remained a crowded, ill-arranged, and chaotic department.

The machine has been clogged by the dust of minute regulations by which the War Office has attempted to

govern the Army. The complexity of regulations is now so great that their interpretation alone leads to a mass of useless correspondence. This state of affairs constitutes a grave detriment to the public service. The practice of making endless references to obtain authority and reluctance to take direct action are inevitable consequences. The simplicity of these regulations the Committee consider is essential to decentralisation. A standing committee, including officers from the districts, they recommend should at once be appointed to deal with this important matter. With regard to financial control and audit the Committee are also in favour of more decentralisation. They have been much struck by the enormous correspondence and great dissatisfaction involved in the recovery of small items that have been disallowed. These recoveries from officers or men who may have been transferred to foreign stations involve an outlay of time, stationery, and postage often exceeding the amount recovered. The Committee, therefore, propose that the decision of a general on the interpretation of regulations should be treated as final, except in the cases of large items. They also suggest that the company's pay-lists should be simplified, and that the soldier should be relieved from small stoppages which give rise to discontent and misunderstanding. The soldier does not exist who does not hold the opinion that in some way or other he is

cheated by Government, and men would be more willing to recruit if they knew exactly what pay they were to draw. In order to confer upon the generals further financial freedom, the Committee recommend that a sum of £250 a-year should be placed at the disposal of each commanding officer to be expended at his absolute discretion, provided the expenditure is for military objects, does not violate regulations, and is of a non-recurrent character. On this point the evidence of General H.R.H. the Duke of Connaught is both interesting and serviceable:—

“We have been told that there is a good deal of correspondence, because the powers of the general officers as regards money are so limited. There was one famous instance given before the Decentralisation Committee, where Sir William Butler could not order straw hats, costing 1½d. each, for the men on a hot day?—That would be so; you could not do that.

“And there are still questions of that kind which are obliged to be referred to Pall Mall?—Yes.

“You are aware, I suppose, of the system existing in India, by which so much money is placed at the disposal of the Commander-in-Chief, and also a lesser sum is placed at the disposal of the commanders of the Army Corps?—And also of Divisions.

“To be spent absolutely at their discretion, provided that it is spent in accordance with the purpose for which it is voted?—Yes. As a matter of fact, twenty years ago I was considered quite fitted to deal with large sums of money, but at the present moment I am not. That shows the difference in the systems of home and in India.

“And you would prefer to be treated as you were in India?—I should very much; and I am quite certain that the country was well served, because one knew exactly how the money was spent, and one

was responsible for the proper spending of the money. It was money well spent. And there, also, one learnt the value of money by seeing how it was spent. You were teaching yourself, and those under you, the value of money.

“Then you would like, sir, to see such a system introduced here, by which a certain sum should be placed at the disposal of the general officer commanding?—Distinctly. I think, at the present time, where general officers are selected they ought to be fitted to manage for themselves; if they are not, they should go. I am speaking for everybody. I should consider that I ought to go if I did not look after the money. I never had any difficulty in India, and I never had any fault found with me in the administration of the money in India; and it was very closely supervised in Calcutta.

“I suppose that a comparatively small sum would be sufficient, say £300 or £400 a-year?—For general purposes you mean, to meet any exceptional case?

“Yes, any small matters that might arise?—It is difficult to name a sum exactly.

“It would not need to be a very large sum?—No; I should think that £200 or £300 would be of great value.

“And it would save a lot of correspondence?—Yes.”

The Committee further recommend that the powers of general officers in dealing with contracts should also be enlarged and defined, and that the limit of the work contracts with which they may deal should be extended to £5000. The Decentralisation Committee of 1898 recommended that general officers should have powers of dealing with contracts for works up to a limit of £2000. The limit was carried, but not without qualifications. The Committee write:—

"The generals are given little voice in the formation of the list of contractors. A general may have good reason on experience to object to a particular contractor. But as he is obliged to accept the lowest tender from a number of competitors, who, being all on the War Office list, are *ex hypothesi* all good and capable, the general may find that the work, for which he is responsible, is handed over to the very individual he distrusts."

On this matter the evidence of General H.R.H. the Duke of Connaught is also instructive:—

"We have been told by one general officer that the power now given to deal with contracts up to £2000 is really an illusion, because the general officers are not consulted in the formation of the list of approved contractors from whom tenders are called; so that there being a list of approved contractors, and all by reason of their being on the list being considered equally good and capable, the lowest tender is naturally accepted?—That is the case.

"Then that does make the general's power an illusion?—Yes, it does to a great extent.

"And the general having no power to revise that list, having no voice in that list, cannot direct the contract to a particular man for particular work?—Yes. I remember a case at Aldershot or Portsmouth where the contractor, I knew, was eminently unfit, and we were ordered to employ him.

"Did you protest?—I did protest. I think Colonel Miles will remember that there was a case at Aldershot of a contractor who had done bad work, and we were ordered to employ him.

"Colonel Miles. I do remember something about it, sir, but I do not remember it very well.—I regret I can only speak from memory."

The evidence of Colonel George Hildebrand, Deputy Inspector-General of Fortifications in charge of the Fortification Branch, is even more

striking and condemnatory than that of the Duke of Connaught. If the statements were not made by an officer of high rank, they would be incredible:—

"Have you ever been overridden in your proposal of the allocation of contracts by the Director of Contracts?—Do you mean to say in the lists?

"Your proposal for a particular tender to be accepted?—In some cases a firm has been put into the list at the last moment, without our knowing it and without our agreeing to it, and with the general and everybody locally objecting: this firm has been the lowest tender. When we have found it out we have expostulated and said, 'We disagree entirely with this man being employed; the general and everybody else object to him.' But we have been overridden.

"Has there ever seemed to be any tenderness towards special contractors?—Yes, certainly. For the last two years there is one certain firm whom we have every reason to be most dissatisfied with, both as regards bad work and delays in work, and from being a sort of sea lawyer. The firm's main object appears to be to get contracts at low prices, and then work the regulations so as to find the weak points in them and make their money up afterwards. They have been objected to over and over again in the course of the last two years by two generals of districts, one of whom at last took the step of leaving them out of the lists of firms to tender, without the consent of the Director of Contracts."

It is not surprising, after the evidence laid before them, that the Committee should recommend that the relations of the Contracts Branch and the Supply Departments should be brought within the scope of definite regulations, and that the heads of the Supply Department and general officers

should have authority in the formation of the list of approved contractors, and may at any time recommend additions or removals from the list. They also recommended that officers who are capable of commanding a district should have some discretion in making occasional local purchases of general stores and articles, excluding munitions of war and clothing, provided the local list does not exceed the prices at which they could be obtained at Woolwich. The Duke of Connaught somewhat surprised the Committee by informing them that an ordinary ladder is either made at Woolwich or purchased there and sent to Ireland. His Royal Highness was asked by the chairman :—

“Are there any other articles like ladders which could be so easily manufactured in Ireland which are supplied in the same way from Woolwich?—Yes. Brooms and brushes, &c., and such barrack stores. This would encourage trade in Ireland.

“But it would be very desirable to do so, would it not?—Most desirable; and it is a great expense to the Government, because all these things have to be sent over to Ireland, and the freights on a large mass of things is considerable; whereas you could buy them on the spot or make them on the spot. If this were done, a contract could be made to include delivery to any station or barrack.

“What is an ordnance workshop limited to doing if you cannot make a ladder?—Repairs, really. That is the only thing they are doing.

“Surely you have plenty of officers in Ireland competent to inspect blankets and ladders?—Yes, any inspection that can be made by an artificer.

“And, in some cases, might it not be cheaper to purchase locally?—

Much cheaper. A list of the articles has been forwarded for your information.

“And it would be a matter of policy also to employ Irish labour to supply the army?—Yes.”

The proposals of the Committee with regard to decentralisation would no doubt throw a mass of business upon the districts. At the present moment, we are told, the office work of the general and his staff is unduly heavy :—

“Purely administrative duties encroach upon their time, at the expense of vitally important duties in regard to the preparation of the army for war. Staff-officers occupied for many hours daily in dealing with matters of military routine, or with those arising in regard to supplies, barracks, and land, cannot be expected to devote sufficient time to the study of questions relating to the higher duties of their profession.”

Wellington was for years occupied for many hours daily in dealing with matters of military routine, or with those arising in regard to supplies, barracks, and land, and he found time for the study of questions relating to the higher duties of his profession. Earl Roberts was for thirty years occupied for many hours daily in dealing with matters of military routine, or with those arising in regard to supplies, barracks, and land, and he too has found time for the study of questions relating to the higher duties of his profession. No soldier can be a successful general who is not acquainted with the details of his profession, and has not the same peculiar combination of qualities which make a great administrator or

an eminent man of business. A strong general will secure the efficiency of his army corps and reduce the control exercised by the War Office to a minimum. But, as the Committee feel bound to state, "in some cases generals appear either to be ignorant of the powers they already possess or to be reluctant to exercise them. Failure on the part of generals to make use of their powers inevitably leads to centralisation." It is, however, necessary that the general, while exercising supervision over every department in his district, should have time to devote his main attention to his own special department—the efficiency and discipline of the troops. In the unit, the army corps, as in the army, there must be three great branches—military, administrative, and financial. In the German army the general officer commanding an army corps is relieved of a great mass of business which falls upon the Intendantur—much of the detail work connected with military routine is discharged by the Adjutantur staff, leaving the general staff free to study the problems of war. The Committee recommend that the general officer should be provided with an adequate business staff under an officer corresponding to the intendant.

"To this officer the general should delegate the business administration of his district, and should thus find himself more free than he is now to devote his time and energy to securing the military efficiency of his troops. The creation of such a staff may involve expense, but this should be met from reductions at the War Office

which should result from the Committee's recommendations."

In Germany the corps intendant—as General Swaine, who was military attaché at Berlin, pointed out—is the representative of the War Office in an army corps, and he is more a servant of the War Minister than he is of the corps commander. The corps commander can overrule the intendant, but then he must make a report to the Emperor on the subject. The intendant is responsible for auditing the accounts, and he makes purchases and contracts for the corps commander. The fact that such an officer exists in the German military administration shows that they have not solved the problem of complete decentralisation. Complete decentralisation is a vain dream. You cannot decentralise finance. In every army corps you must have the representative of the State, and it is best, as in India, to have an officer of high rank as local controller of accounts, for he has no temptation to interfere with the executive or administrative branches. The general should have the amplest powers, under the direct orders and supervision of the Commander-in-Chief, with regard to the discipline and efficiency of the troops. Not through an intendant, who would be the servant of the War Office, but through his own responsible officer, the quartermaster-general, the general should see that the army corps is properly provided for, and if anything was not done, to make a representation. The heads of the

local or supply departments should have ample powers, but they should be directly responsible for the work of their departments to the chief of the administrative departments. The local controllers of military accounts would be directly responsible to the Accountant-General.

Sir George Chesney, a great military administrator, writes—

“At first sight it might seem indeed that a system under which one man is responsible for the efficiency as well as the discipline of troops, while another authority is responsible for supplying the equipments on which that efficiency is largely dependent, involves a dangerous division of responsibility. It is, however, as has been said, the system which obtains in every well-administered army.”

The Commander-in-Chief in India, as Sir George Chesney points out, is the head of one department of the army, the command and discipline of the troops, the most important department, but still only one of many. “In this respect he has full authority subject to the regulations laid down by the Government; and as responsible for the discipline and efficiency of the troops, he has practically uncontrolled power of selection for appointments in all the combatant branches of the army.” The Commander-in-Chief has under him three principal officers—Adjutant-General, Principal Medical Officer, and Quartermaster-General. Under the Adjutant-General are the Inspector-General of Cavalry, Inspector-General of Artillery, Judge Advocate-General, Director of Military Education, and Principal Veterinary, and there

is a General Branch of his office. Under the Quartermaster-General is the Intelligence Branch, the Mobilisation Branch, and a General Branch.

But besides this great department of discipline and command under the Commander-in-Chief, there are also, as Sir George Chesney states in his *Indian Polity*, the various administrative departments of the army, for the most part spending departments, the ordnance, commissariat, transport, clothing, fortifications and military buildings, and stud: these, which, together with the business which comes up from the Commander-in-Chief, make up the whole business of the army, are administered for the military department of the Government by the Military Member of Council. In the British army the Supply Departments were some few years ago placed nominally under the Commander-in-Chief—“but only nominally,” writes Sir George Chesney, “for in fact the action of the Commander-in-Chief is controlled at every point by the Civil departments at the War Office, and so far as the change has been carried, it has led to nothing but increased confusion and maladministration, and would inevitably break down under the first stress of war.” It has broken down under the first stress of war. The Indian system has always worked with perfect success and has stood the test of sundry campaigns. In the Indian system, as we have stated, the Commander-in-Chief

is answerable for the efficiency and discipline of the troops, and the Military Member of Council, an officer of almost equal rank, is answerable for the Supply departments; but the actual practice diverges from what may appear to be the official order of procedure.

"As a matter of fact," writes Sir George Chesney, who had held the office of Military Member of Council, "the disposal of questions of equipment, armament, and defence is the result of joint-deliberation. No change of equipment, no military work, is carried out without the opinion of the Commander-in-Chief being formally obtained in writing. Almost all changes arise out of proposals initiated by the Commander-in-Chief himself; and apart from the formal correspondence there will always be, between reasonable men, a full and free personal discussion."

The Commander-in-Chief has the whole patronage of the army, and similarly the Military Member of Council nominates to all the administrative appointments; but, as Sir George Chesney states, "he will be unfit for his position if he does not take care that his nominations shall be in general accordance with the wishes of the Commander-in-Chief, so that these important posts may be filled by men who have the confidence of the latter." General Sir Henry Brackenbury, a very able and strong administrator, who now holds the position of Director-General of Ordnance, and has had long experience of military administration in England, besides having held with conspicuous success the office of Military Member in India, strenuously advocated

before the Committee the necessity of creating a similar post at home.

"Then you go on to say: 'There should be a military head over all the administrative and supply services (I suggest a military Under-Secretary of State), whose duty it should be to see that all proposals are considered from all the administrative and supply points of view,'—that is to say, as I understand, you consider that there should be some authority over all the military supply departments, who would bring them together and push the work on in conjunction?—Yes, that he should see that they worked together and see that the questions are taken up.

"Such an officer would, in fact, practically correspond to the Military Member of the Council in India?—It would be the same sort of thing; that is really the organisation that I had in view, the Secretary of State, as it were, taking the place of the Viceroy, and the supply and executive departments being represented by the military under secretary and Commander-in-Chief respectively.

"Then the Commander-in-Chief would be left entirely free for the executive duties of command?—The executive duties of command and all those great questions which the Commander-in-Chief has to consider and which he is wanted for.

"This officer, who you suggest would be a military Under-Secretary of State, would therefore be the person responsible for the efficient working of all supply departments, the Director-General of Ordnance, the Inspector-General of Fortifications, and so on?—Responsible for bringing them together, for collating their work, and seeing that every question that came forward from the Commander-in-Chief was considered from all the different points of view. Now, I do not see that there is any body who does that at the War Office.

"Was the Army Board provided to any extent to meet such a difficulty?—The Army Board as it is now constituted was, I think, intended to meet that difficulty, but the Army Board very seldom meets.

"If it met more regularly would it provide for that difficulty to a greater extent?—I do not think it would do it in the same way: you bring together a great many very busy men, with perhaps nothing to talk about particularly. But if you had some one whose duty it was to act as a sort of permanent head, who should have all the supply departments brought together two or three times a-week (you do not want the Commander-in-Chief, the Adjutant-General, and Military Secretary), you would, I think, greatly improve the business."

The Committee in a certain degree adopt the suggestion of Sir Henry Brackenbury. They state that the work of the three Supply Departments which might admit of better distribution could possibly be brought together under one military head. The functions of the head of the Supply Department, variously known in past times as the Master-General of Ordnance or Surveyor-General, would then be revived. That office, after a long existence, they remind us, was abolished in 1887, by which time it had ceased to be held by a high military officer as was originally intended. If the office were reconstituted under a high military officer, as they suggest, he would be charged with the general supervision of the three Supply Departments, and the co-operation and co-ordination of these departments would thus be secured.

"There would be certain advantages to this measure," they add; "but it is not denied that the creation of such an office would affect the direct responsibility to the Secretary of State which is vested in the heads of the three Departments in question by the existing Order in Council."

The title Chief of the Administrative Staff would better express the duties of the office than the title proposed by General Sir Henry Brackenbury—Military Under-Secretary of State. As General Brackenbury recommends, he should be a high military officer, and be appointed for five years, with power of extension. There is no reason why the creation of such an office should affect the direct responsibility of the heads of the departments to the Secretary of State. In India the military department, like every other department of the State, is under the ultimate control and supervision of the Viceroy, before whom all important papers from the military department and every other department are laid. In the Indian Constitution there is an important provision that the secretary, and not his chief the Member of Council, is responsible for what cases shall be placed before the Viceroy. The secretary in charge of each department has also to attend at least once a-week separately on the Governor-General, who in this way keeps himself informed of the business of different departments. This is the procedure laid down in India, and it might easily be adapted to the War Office. The creation of a Chief of the Administrative Staff should not interfere with the privilege or right of access to the Secretary of State of the head of a department, and it is the head of a department who would be responsible for bringing an important

case before the Secretary of State. But there is one very grave, almost vital, objection to the procedure, which Sir George Chesney noticed. The work of the Supply Departments constantly overlap, and when their opinions differed, each head going to the Secretary of State must lead to administrative confusion. As General Brackenbury states—

“There should be one man directing, with sufficient authority to be able to bring them together and see that they are all really taking up and working out every point in connection with any proposal that comes before the Secretary of State. . . . He would be responsible to the Secretary of State that the thing had been thoroughly thrashed out by all the departments, and then he should present the case to the Secretary of State, so that the Secretary of State might have the fullest knowledge of it.”

The case would, of course, contain the minutes of the heads of the departments, which would enable the Secretary of State to form an independent judgment on it. By having a Commander-in-Chief there is a co-ordination among the different departments relating to the efficiency and discipline of the troops; so by having an officer of high military rank as chief of the administrative departments, General Brackenbury wishes to secure co-ordination among them.

The Committee, in order to accomplish the same end,—co-ordination among the different departments,—recommend that a permanent War Office Board be established. According to the recommendation of the

Hartington Commission, 1890, a War Office Council and also an Army Board were formed. But the experiment has not proved a success. Two Boards, as the Committee state, are not compatible with efficient business procedure. “Moreover, the existing War Office Council and Army Board have extremely limited powers. They have no rights of initiative and no well-defined responsibilities beyond that of giving advice to the Secretary of State when requested to do so on matters referred to them.” The proposed permanent Board would consist of the Secretary of State as President, who “would attend and preside when he should think fit.” The Commander-in-Chief would in the absence of the Secretary of State be the chairman whenever important questions demand his attendance, and would, with military heads of departments, represent the army; the permanent Under-Secretary of State would be deputy chairman, providing for the continuity of the business of the Board, and representing with the Parliamentary Under-Secretary the financial, and the Accountant-General the civil, element of the War Office. “Thus the deliberations of the Board would have the advantage of expert knowledge in every subject, whether from the military or civil side.” The proposed Board, it appears, while “acting under the authority of the Secretary of State, and without in any way detracting from the authority of the Commander-in-Chief and

the military heads of departments," would be expected "to control and supervise the business of the War Office as a whole." It is open to grave doubt whether the arrangement would work. Here are some cogent reasons of Sir Ralph Knox:—

"It is rather to preserve the position and responsibility of the Secretary of State independent of the Board that I think it is necessary that he should not be a member of the Board. It would be open to all these officers to propose anything which they thought was for the advantage and improvement of the army, and they would obtain the consensus of their colleagues, and they would work the proposal out completely, subject to the criticism of the Financial Officer, who would be present on that Board. You cannot put the Financial Secretary and the Secretary of State and the Under-Secretary of State on that Board; but they may all have, and should all have, a voice in dealing with the matter finally."

The same objection applies with equal force to the presence of the Commander-in-Chief. On the other hand, it would be hardly wise to have an Army Board without the Commander-in-Chief. As Sir Evelyn Wood, the Adjutant-General, says—

"I think there is a feeling now that the Commander-in-Chief has not been strong enough, and I am afraid the effect of having any Board over which the Commander-in-Chief himself did not preside would be to lessen his authority, and that the Secretary of State might go behind him and accept the opinions of the Army Board."

The Adjutant-General proceeded to give a somewhat striking illustration of the working of the present Army Board. "I should tell you,"

he remarked, "that the mind of the late Commander-in-Chief was so constituted in some of his ideas that he has turned to me not once but a dozen times, and has said, 'You and I are the two wise men, but the Army Board have beaten us.' The Committee put forward their proposal for an Army Board on the ground, as we have stated, that the administration of the War Office requires a central co-ordinating authority under the Secretary of State.

"In a large business undertaking," they write, "whose central authority rests on a board of directors, a clearly defined and rational division of business responsibilities is maintained among the departments, with close association and union for a common object. For the constitution of such a board the War Office offers peculiar advantages, as the majority of members would have technical knowledge."

In a large business undertaking the central authority rests on, it is true, a board of directors, but not on a board consisting of the heads of departments. The fact is, no manufacturing business can be conducted without a competent and responsible manager as the head of it. The Chief of the Administrative Departments would, as General Brackenbury says, "become managing director of what I should call the Supply Departments of the War Office." The Board of Directors of the War Office should be the War Office Council. It should consist of the Secretary of State, responsible to the Sovereign and to Parliament for the whole Military Administration; the Commander-in-Chief, responsible

for the efficiency and discipline of the troops ; the Chief of the Administrative Departments, responsible for the great departments of supply ; the Financial Secretary, responsible for the expenditure. And, as in the India Council, there should be on it an independent man of business. The Secretary of State should undoubtedly have power to override his Council. The Permanent Under-Secretary of State should hold a position analogous to that of the private secretary of the Viceroy. He is not a private secretary in the ordinary sense of the term, but he is the head of a central office or bureau. The bureau would be small, but it should be manned by the ablest men the Civil Service could produce. The Chief of the Administrative Departments would have his own bureau, in which, as in India, the deputy secretaries would be qualified military men. This scheme is similar to the scheme sketched by Mr Sidney Herbert many years ago. Instead of a

chief of the administrative staff, he proposed two permanent Under-Secretaries, one civilian and the other military. It is, however, impossible to frame a scheme of War Office and Army Reform which would not be open to criticism, and would not leave certain problems unsolved. The scheme of the recent Committee is based upon the only principle applicable to a constitutional country, that of placing a statesman at the head of the Army Department, and strengthening his hands not by surrounding him with civil officials but by all the military experienced assistance which can be given him. To develop, perfect, and adopt that scheme rests with a statesman who has the advantages of youth and energy, and has shown that he has the courage of his own opinion. He must expect internal opposition. On one thing he may depend—the country will support any Minister who is determined to create a real War Department.

BLACKWOOD'S
EDINBURGH MAGAZINE.

No. MXXX.

AUGUST 1901.

VOL. CLXX.

A BORDER BURN.

I.

WHERE Autumn runnels fret and foam
Past banks of amber fern,
Since track was none I chanced to roam
Along a Border burn.

II.

The rain was gone, the winds were furled,
No cloud was in the sky,
So that there seemed in all the world
Only the stream and I.

III.

At length upon a grey-granite stone
I sate me down to dream,
Till, with its flow familiar grown,
I thus addressed the stream:

IV.

“Dear Border Burn, that had your birth
Where hills stand bright and high,
Whose lowlier parent is the earth,
Whose loftier the sky;

V.

“Half-heavenly therefore in your source,
Withal to man akin,
Betraying by your wayward course
Your mingled origin;

VI.

‘Why, in a scene so fair as this,
Not linger while you may,
And lengthen out unchided bliss
In childlike holiday?

VII.

“Encircled here by native hills,
And fringed by wilding flowers,
With all your playmate sister rills
To wile away the hours,

VIII.

“Past glowing heather, silvery sedge,
You hurry on, and on,
Rush at the rock, then leap the ledge,
All eager to be gone.

IX.

“For you the mavis thrills the brake,
For you the laverocks soar,
And even snow and sleet but make
You dance and sing the more.

X.

“The water-ouzels dip and shoot
Amid your flashing spray,
Where flapping heron, skimming coot,
Forage, and pair, and play.

XI.

“The forest doe forsakes the hill,
Companioned by her fawn,
In your clear pools to drink her fill,
As darkness yields to dawn.

XII.

“When meadows gleam with burnished gold,
Some tender-bosomed maid
Comes down from far-off manse or fold,
And, under birchen shade,

XIII.

“Trembles to tale of manhood brave,
Or courtship long and sweet,
And sometimes in your freshening wave
Will dip her dainty feet;

XIV.

“And, deaf to sound from neighbouring glen
Of summer-cooing doves,
Hear but your voice, and deem it then
The voice of him she loves.

XV.

“And, be the season keen or kind,
Frowning or fair the sky,
The poet, with his musing mind,
Hither will ofttimes hie,

XVI.

“And listening, lost among the fern,
To murmur sweet or strong,
Now not less strong than sweet, doth learn
To modulate his song.

XVII.

“And, thus attuned to every string
Nature is skilled to strike,
Mellows the thoughts that comfort bring
To glad and sad alike.

XVIII.

“Friends fond and faithful such as these
Why do you long to leave,
For scenes that, since untried, can please,
But lure you to deceive?

XIX.

“The forward quest, the feverish chase,
Foul city, venal mart,
Will cloud the fairness of your face,
And desecrate your heart.

XX.

“Here betwixt fern and flower you still
Can wind and wander free;
There granite banks will curb your will,
And chain your liberty.”

XXI.

I ceased. But though I paused to learn,
No answer seemed to come,
And, save an onward-bickering burn,
All now again was dumb.

XXII.

It rolled and rippled, swept and swirled,
No other sound was nigh;
So that there seemed, in all the world,
Only the stream and I.

XXIII.

But, like the babbled words that make
The mother's heart rejoice,
Slowly the stream's soul seemed to wake,
And find a human voice:

XXIV.

Till, waxing stronger and more clear
Still as it rushed along,
Its answer sounded on mine ear,
Lucid as poet's song:

XXV.

"Here was I born, here nursed and bred,
From here shall carry still
Something of moor and bracken-bed,
Something of heath and hill.

XXVI.

"Yet, like to you, who suckled first
Where becks through boulders wind,
In youth from loving bondage burst,
And left your home behind,

XXVII.

"To seek the far-off larger life
Where mind with mind contends,
On peaceful fields, in generous strife,
To further loftier ends;

XXVIII.

"So do I quit my native hills,
Red rowan, hawthorn pearled,
My brother braes, my sister rills,
To find a wider world,

XXIX.

"And, with a half-reluctant heart,
Leave dingle, dale, and wood,
To bear a meek but manly part
In burdened brotherhood.

XXX.

"Why should I selfishly remain
A simple mountain stream,
Or shrink, because some earthy stain
Cloudeth each heavenly dream?

XXXI.

"Chide me not, then, nor seek to stay
The current of my soul.
Though conflict check or chafe my way,
The Ocean is my goal;

XXXII.

"Where I from sea to sea shall ride,
Shall roll from shore to shore,
And with the Universal Tide
Be one for evermore;

XXXIII.

"Yet, by Heaven's Law of Love allowed,
Revolving, to return,
Wafted by wind, and borne on cloud,
Still be a Border Burn."

ALFRED AUSTIN.

THREE YEARS WITH THE METROPOLITAN FIRE BRIGADE.

I.

My connection with the Metropolitan Fire Brigade came about in this wise. In the year 1883 I had just come down from Cambridge, and was casting about in my mind as to the direction in which I should make my first start in life. It is a difficult enough problem for most young men to solve, and in my case was not rendered easier in that I was at the time a martyr to what the faculty were pleased to term "hepatic troubles," and the only hope that they held out of my not becoming a permanent invalid lay in my taking up some thoroughly active occupation. On the other hand, family affairs stood in the way of my betaking myself to the colonies. While I was in this dilemma I had the good fortune to make the acquaintance of Captain Shaw, who, in fact, was a distant connection of mine, and at his invitation attended two or three of Mrs Shaw's Wednesday afternoons at the Brigade headquarters in Southwark Bridge Road, some of the principal attractions of which were the turning out of the engines to imaginary calls for the benefit of the visitors, and the opening of the workshops, stables, and other internal economy of the Brigade to general inspection. Being curious to see more of the life, I next obtained leave from Captain Shaw to spend an occa-

sional night at Headquarters on the chance of getting a run with the engines. The very first night Messrs Silver's establishment in Cornhill took fire. We went on, I think, about midnight, and did not come home till just before daybreak, and that in the month of December; I was wet and dirty, but happy. Here was the profession which would give me plenty of exercise, and at the same time allow of my keeping in touch with my family. It was not without its prizes, too; and, what was by no means its least advantage, it was not overcrowded, as other professions were. I would be a fireman.

My relations were horrified at the proposal. I talked over the matter with Captain Shaw. Even he, I think, was rather inclined to look at it from the purely conventional standpoint of its being contrary to the received notions of what a young man ought and ought not to do with himself, and did not wax so enthusiastic as I had perhaps expected at the idea of my wanting to follow in his footsteps. But he was very kind, and said if I had quite made up my mind I had better start on the drilling and other training necessary to qualify as a fireman, and, after I had been through it all, if his instructors gave a satisfactory account of me, he would give me a certificate. The Chief

Officer of the Metropolitan Fire Brigade, in those days of the Metropolitan Board of Works, was the Chief Officer, and when he said a thing could, should, or might be done, there was no further question about it.

I started next day. There were about ten of us in the drill class, some of whom have since risen to be officers, while others have retired to private situations, or gone back to sea after availing themselves of the opportunity afforded them by the Brigade of taking a rest (?) on shore—a not uncommon practice with a certain percentage of the recruits, though of course they were not able to play the game more than once. Being the only landsman among a lot of seamen, I was naturally at a disadvantage in the matter of knots and climbing, and more especially in carrying on at a dizzy height, with perhaps only twelve inches or so of foothold, as though one were on the firm ground below; but I think I was fairly successful in disguising such qualms as I suffered when I first had to go aloft.

We had escape drill most mornings, and engine drill of afternoons; nine to twelve, and one to four, every day except Saturday, which was cleaning-up day; and I was at it regularly from the 2nd of January to the end of March, when I was passed out of the class. Escape drill included every variety of life-saving, and the manipulation of ladders to cope with every conceivable emergency that might arise in the course of a real fire. It was by

far the hardest training of any that the incipient fireman had to undergo. The escapes in use in the Brigade at that time were of the old-fashioned type, with fly ladder bolted to and folding over on to the main ladder, wire shoot below the main ladder, and first-floor and supplemental ladders stowed on the carriage frame and main ladder respectively: a somewhat cumbrous form of machine, which has now been superseded by the telescopic escape, in which the auxiliary lengths are run up out of each other by means of a winch and endless wire-rope, and the shoot is dispensed with altogether. We had to run the escape across the yard; pitch it against the wall and block the wheels; throw up the fly ladder, either alone or with one of the additional lengths attached,—an operation which, especially in the latter case, took some strenuous hauling at the lever lines at the foot of the fly ladder, the mechanical advantage, till the dead-point was passed, being so greatly against the men; go up to a window or on the roof, and carry or be carried down in turns; then come down, make up the ladder, run round the yard again, and so on. Or we would unship the fly ladder and use it in conjunction with the first-floor or supplemental lengths apart from the main ladder, in view of possible cases where space or obstructions would not allow of the escape being brought close up to the fire in its entirety. Or we would practise lowering the

head of the escape on the run to take it through an arch, raising it again immediately after it had passed through; or throwing up the fly ladder while the main ladder was standing with its head unsupported, as would have to be done in some of the narrower streets and lanes where the only room for the swing of the fly ladder could be obtained fore and aft, the additional lengths required being carried up and attached afterwards. But to go on detailing the various exercises through which we were put would become wearisome; the permutations and combinations which could be got out of the constituent parts of the old fire-escape were legion; and there were few, if any, circumstances under which the fireman might at some time find himself called upon to act, which twenty years of experience had not taught Captain Shaw and his officers to foresee and provide against.

Carrying down was the most nervous part of the escape drill—to me, at anyrate. I didn't mind being carried down in the least, and I think the other men preferred carrying me down to anybody else, probably because not only was I one of the lightest in the class, but there was also less of me lengthways to interfere with the free use of their arms and legs while passing down the escape. The subject on whom carrying down has to be practised has to lie down in as limp a heap as possible, and try to forget that he has a backbone or any other of his natural bodily functions, so as to

simulate a person temporarily overcome by suffocation. The rescuer then turns him on to his back and lays him out decently, with his arms and legs carefully smoothed down in a straight line with his body, as if he was a Sunday coat going to be put carefully away; and having done that, turns him over on to his face, and, getting hold of him under the arms, lifts him until he can put one of his knees under him, when he shifts his hold to his waist and raises him upright. He next grasps the other's left wrist with his right hand, and, stooping down, passes his left arm between his legs, or round her dress if a woman, letting the inert mass drop across his shoulders, so that when he rises he has got it as comfortably fastened round his neck as a lady's boa, while he has his own arms free to get down with. Strapping great sailor men, as most of my comrades in the class were, naturally looked upon bringing down a trifle like myself as mere child's play; and I can truthfully say that, when I had delivered myself over to their charge for good or evil, I never had the slightest fear of the latter happening to me, and could look down from their shoulders into the fifty odd feet of space below me with the utmost complacency—even at the somewhat ticklish moment of stepping off the parapet round the top of the ladder. And I never once found my confidence in them to be misplaced.

But there was a degree of responsibility about carrying

any one else down that I must confess I would have been very glad to shirk. Nor, when it came to my turn to take the active part in the operation, did there appear to be any very keen competition on the part of my colleagues for the honour of affording me the means to do so. Rather, in the earlier days of my drill, did it invariably happen that, when all the others had paired off and gone over the side, the last man left alone with me on the roof was either under the impression that it was his turn to carry me down, or else had been specially told off by the instructor to look for something, unspecified, that had been left on the roof, and so wasn't available for my purpose. This wasn't getting on with my drill, however; and so at last, with the aid of a half-crown, I managed to induce the youngest and slightest, and possibly the most reckless, of the class to let me carry him down; and with one or two pauses on the way, which were mainly owing to his making me laugh in spite of myself at his quaint reflections as to the kind of mess he was likely to become on the flags down below, we reached the end of our journey in perfect safety, but myself in a cold perspiration all over.

Having thus evidenced my ability to save a man's life without breaking his neck, and the above-mentioned little business transaction having no doubt got about, I had no further difficulty in getting other candidates for the pro-

cess on the same terms: and by the time I had laid out some twenty-five to thirty shillings on this part of my education, though I had thought it wisest to leave the very biggest and heaviest of the class alone, I felt myself quite competent to handle any man or woman up to a stone or two heavier than myself. I think the officer in charge of the drill class was pleased with my progress, but he never gave me any direct encouragement as regarded my carrying-down performances. Indeed I began to notice that whenever I had brought my burden down to the bottom of the ladder, and was looking round for his approbation, he had always just remembered that he had important business on the other side of the yard and was on his way to attend to it. Probably his view of the matter was, that whatever right the other men might have to make arrangements with me in their individual capacity, he was bound to regard them as part of the Board of Works' property, and so could not officially countenance anything savouring of risk to their market value. At all events, when the time came for me to pass out, and I was wondering whom he would tell off for me to carry down, he solemnly climbed up to the top of the escape, lay down in the gutter, and announced that he was prepared to submit to the ordeal. He was a very large man, standing close on six feet in his shoes, and weighing something like fifteen or sixteen stone, and I cannot say I

liked the prospect before me at all. It took all I knew to get him on to my shoulders, and in getting on to the ladder I all but shot him right over like a sack of coals; but we held together somehow, and after what seemed to me like several hours descending, in the course of which I stopped three or four times to ask him anxiously if he could provide for his own safety in case I really had to let him go,—the very idea of which he most encouragingly scoffed at,—I accomplished my task, to find awaiting us in the yard a little crowd of his immediate juniors, who were kind enough to inform me that more than once while we were on our way down they had been confident of obtaining their long-hoped-for promotion. The officer in question has since been one of the Superintendents of the Brigade: I wonder if he ever reflects how near he was to having his career cut short for ever on that, to me, memorable afternoon. I am sorry to think that my sensations at the time were more of pride than of thankfulness; but for two or three weeks afterwards I felt as though I had been shut up three or four inches like a telescope.

Other forms of life-saving which we were exercised in were the chair-knot and the jumping-sheet. The chair-knot is a very simple adaptation of the double overhand knot, very easy to make, and extremely comfortable to escape from a fire in; and I should recommend every prudent householder to get the nearest fire-

man to show it him, and he may find it come in very useful some day. As regards the jumping-sheet practice, I have seen the jumper's part of the performance described in a popular monthly magazine by an enthusiastic visitor to the Brigade as the most nerve-trying item in the whole of the fireman's drill. This is not so. Holding the sheet is rather trying, as the impact with the extended surface of a heavyish body coming down from a second-floor window is apt to throw a severe momentary strain on the holder's loins; but the actual jumping, as I once heard one of the drill class appropriately remark about it, is as easy as falling off a house. All one had to do was to climb on to the window-sill and stand up outside; glance down to see that the sheet was there, and taut; then gaze up towards heaven, and step off into space, remembering to make oneself as limp as possible, as otherwise, if one came down too stiff, the rebound was increased, and one was apt to be shot off at the side of the sheet; and there one was, as happy as if one was being tossed in an ordinary blanket. I do not think there was any part of my training that I enjoyed so much as the jumping. The sensation was as pleasant as that of diving off a height into water, with not nearly the same chances of hurting oneself.

Then there was scaling-ladder drill. The scaling-ladders are carried on irons at the sides of the engines, and are so con-

structed that the foot of any one will pass outside the head of any other; and the extremities fitting into sockets provided for the purpose, a continuous length of ladder can be built up to forty or fifty feet with safety, though beyond that it has been found advisable not to go. They are not often used for life-saving, but chiefly for getting the hose in at an upper-storey window or over a wall, and for other purposes of that sort, for which their adaptability in the matter of length makes them especially suitable. The full complement of men for scaling-ladder drill is three, though it is also practised with two; and the chief difficulty which it presents is that, all the additional lengths being added at the bottom, the foot of the already completed ladder being raised to a man's height off the ground to receive the fresh lengths, the men, or, in the case of two-men drill, the man who has to do the holding up has a pretty tough job of it as the building process goes on to keep the head from getting out of the straight and coming down with a run. When one man finds himself called upon to put together scaling-ladders alone, he has to lay them out flat on the ground and butt them together there, afterwards under-walking them from the head till he has got them upright against the wall. I only did this once, when I was passing out, and I never want to do it again. To a tall man it probably wouldn't matter so much, as he can keep nearer the centre of gravity

while the ladders are passing the critical point; but I hadn't that advantage, and though I fortunately did neither, it was touch and go that I did not break either a blood-vessel or the ladders, or both.

We had engine drill with the manual four days a-week, sometimes with a full crew of six men, at others with five, four, and down to one,—the drills, which then numbered exactly one gross, being arranged to suit all these contingencies, as well as those of the lengths of hose and of suction that might require to be used. In the new drill book, which came out shortly after I had parted company with the Brigade, the number of drills was reduced to forty-two. We were numbered off, and each of us had his allotted function in the setting up of the manual, getting her to work, and making up again. Then we changed rounds and went through it all over again, till every one had done everything. We were initiated into the mysteries of ranging down, flaking down, and piling hose; we had to lay it out round corners, shoulder it, get it on to roofs and in at windows, and lower it down again; to add lengths, take them off, and replace damaged hose—in fact, go through nearly as severe and just as searching a course with the manual in the afternoon as we did with the escape in the morning. Passing out in engine drill consisted in getting the manual to work by oneself in the shortest reasonable space of time. I did it in a trifle under two minutes: it has

been done in one; but after all, though a fire may make a good deal of headway in five minutes, one, except in the case of what the newspaper reporter would probably describe as "a phenomenally voracious conflagration," would be hardly likely to constitute an insuperable handicap.

All our manual drill was done in the dry; but on Friday mornings we had wet drill, one or other of the steamers from the other stations coming down in its turn to Headquarters for us to work with. I used to enjoy those Fridays immensely: what with the busy thud-thud of the steamer and the rush of the water through the hose, it was so much more like the real thing than the ordinary drill, and I had hardly yet learnt then that the less excitement one feels about one's fire work the better. The big canvas cistern, known professionally by the soul-satisfying name of the "universal dam," was set up in the yard, and, the steamer having been got to work out of the tidal well in the centre of the yard,—a relic, I believe, of the old days when Headquarters was the London palace of the Bishops of Winchester, and Protestant martyrs used to be burnt in that very yard,—we were sent with the hose up the escapes standing against the buildings, and took shots at the dam with the deliveries—by no means so easy a job as it sounds, as, with the steamer working at full pressure, the back kick of the branch was sometimes so strong as to seriously imperil one's position

on the ladder—until we had filled it; by which time, if the tide was out and the water stood low in the well, we had generally emptied the latter. Then the suction was shifted into the dam, and after we had flaked down the hose according to prescription, we advanced in parallel lines the whole length of the yard, washing it down with a thoroughness and searchingness that would have been hard to beat by any other method of carrying out the operation; the week's work being thus virtually concluded—for on Friday afternoons we only took the manual to pieces, and our instructor gave us a lecture on its construction—with a practical illustration of all we had been learning during the preceding days, and a general clean up of things for Sunday thrown in.

The ordinary routine for the newly joined fireman in my time was that he was drafted to some outside station when he had passed out of the drill class, only coming back to take his turn at the workshops after the lapse of some time. As there was no occasion, however, for me to be bound down by strict precedent, I went on to the workshops at once, and though I was not definitely told off to take any active part in the proceedings there, yet by watching attentively here, and bearing a hand to a job there, I spent a very profitable six weeks picking up what there was to learn of the arrangements of steamers and manuals, both external and internal, and the ailments to which they were

subject, with the remedies therefor, the tying on of couplings to the hose, the repair of hose, and suchlike; besides entering into the mysteries of standard gauges and sealed patterns, without a knowledge of which any one intending to go into the fire business would very soon find himself going astray.

Nothing was actually manufactured in the workshops; some of the gear was completed there, as, for instance, in the case of the hose couplings being tied on, the hose and the couplings coming from two different firms; but for the most part only repairs were carried on, and only those of the less serious kind: quite enough, however, to give the men a close insight into the nature of the appliances which they had to handle in the course of their business. I understand that the present Chief Officer has now done away with the system of passing every fireman in his turn through the workshops, and has introduced a body of artificers to do the repairs who are quite distinct from the firemen, having no more to do with fire extinction than the firemen have to do with the workshops. It is of course not for me to criticise; but I cannot help humbly expressing my opinion that he has made a great mistake.

And last of all I went to the floats to learn steam, and so complete my education. Learning steam did not necessarily imply that I was to be instructed in the whole theory of it, with all the reasons why certain causes produced, or were likely to produce, certain effects;

though, as it happened, for my own private gratification, I got up as much as I could on the subject from text-books, supplemented by occasional talks with the Chief in the evenings. What was taught us on the floats was mainly confined to the effects that were likely to result from certain causes—in other words, we were shown in a more or less rule-of-thumb fashion how to handle a steamer without bringing either it or ourselves to grief over it.

There were four floating stations in those days: A, or Chelsea, off the Chelsea Embankment; B, or Southwark, off Southwark Bridge; C, or Wapping, off the Docks; and D, or Rotherhithe, off Rotherhithe Pier. These have been increased to five now, and the B float has been moved to Charing Cross. I was sent to the B float, as being then the nearest to headquarters, and set to acquire the rudiments of firing and engine-tending on board the *Buffalo*. She was a paddle-steamer, arranged so that by putting over a lever the paddle-wheels could be uncoupled from the main shaft and the pumps got to work off the same engines that drove her; very powerful in her deliveries, which were eight in number, but very cumbrous and slow, and farther, by reason of even her comparatively slight draught, difficult to bring into action at a waterside fire when the tide was running out. She had been one of the earliest experiments in steam-floats, and, despite her numerous disadvantages, had done good work in her time; but as

the resources of the Brigade increased in this direction, she was eventually superseded in my time,—the more convenient system of mounting powerful equilibrium fire-engines on to flat-bottomed rafts, which could be laid comfortably right on the mud, the motive power being supplied by fleet and independently acting tugs, being universally adopted.

When the officer in charge of the float considered that I had been sufficiently grounded in the use of steam, I was put on board a raft, which had been thoughtfully moored farther out in the tideway, well away from the Buffalo, in case of any unforeseen accidents, and left alone with a big land steamer to do what I could, or liked, with it. It was the awkwardest steamer to handle in the Brigade, being direct acting, with the piston and pump rods in one, and the steam and exhaust ports actuated by a wonderful contrivance something like a magnified clock escapement, which had a nasty way of sticking every two or three minutes, and having to be pinched over with a marling-spike, at the imminent risk of one's fingers. The men always affectionately referred to it as the sausage-machine; and the

officer, in taking what seemed to me to intimately resemble a last long farewell of me as I got into the dinghy to go to my task, put me on my mettle by affirming that if I could run that steamer I could run anything.

I did run it, however; and that without any further *contretemps* than that, busily engaged as I had been in getting up my steam from cold water within the prescribed time and keeping up my steam-pressure when I had got it, I did not notice in which direction my branch was pointing; so that, when I did finally open my delivery-valve and get triumphantly to work, the copious stream which issued from the nozzle, instead of returning peaceably as it should have done to the bosom of Father Thames whence it had been taken, described a magnificent parabola upwards, and for the moment devastated a large area on Southwark Bridge. That was soon mended, however; and after a week or ten days more of practice with the sausage-machine, so as to become thoroughly acquainted with all its ins and outs and little eccentricities, I was reported to the Chief and received my certificate.

II.

Again contrary to the usual method of procedure in the training of the budding fireman, I did not wait till I had finished my drill course before attending fires, but from the very first took to spending my nights

at the station, waiting for anything in the nature of a call to turn up.

Headquarters being more or less of the nature of a district in itself, kept in reserve in case of any reinforcements being re-

quired in one or other of the four Superintendents' districts—now five—into which London was divided, or of the personal attendance of the Chief Officer being rendered necessary by the serious aspect of the particular job in hand, it not unfrequently happened that, with the exception perhaps of a home call or two to a curtain on fire, or something of a like minor nature, in our own immediate neighbourhood, brought in by a runner or our own particular alarm circuit, we got long periods of undisturbed nights in bed. I have known these periods extend over as much as three weeks or a month; and they generally seemed to come with chief persistence when any of my friends had elected to spend a night with me at the station in the hope of getting an opportunity of seeing the Brigade at work. I only ever remember one of them who got a big turn-out for his trouble. Short of incendiarism, I did everything I could to make things pleasant for them; but I am afraid that the principal feeling with which they went away in the morning was that our work was on the whole remarkably light, and that I was a distinct fraud.

As a matter of fact, these long periods of rest were as a rule more than counterbalanced by the rapid succession in which the calls, once they did begin again, came in on the top of one another. I have myself attended three, four, and even up to six fires in one night; sometimes getting a sufficient interval between them to change my things, or even for a short

snooze; sometimes being sent on directly on the steamer's return to the station by a man posted at the gate with the order not to draw our fire; and sometimes going straight on from one fire to the other without going home at all. It is in one of these two latter cases, especially in winter-time, when one has to forgo the anticipated pleasure of shifting one's wet, and often half-frozen, things for dry ones, and go on just as one is, that the true inwardness of the fireman's life makes itself evident.

And even when the fireman is spared the inconvenience of having to be as far as possible in two or three different parts of London at once, and is fortunate enough to have only one job to think about, it very often happens that job is sufficiently large in itself, and lasts a sufficiently long time, to satisfy even the most exacting appetite for work. I remember one fire, in a huge block of coffee warehouses down Wapping way, which burnt steadily from Saturday afternoon till the early hours of Tuesday morning, notwithstanding that for the first twenty-four hours every steamer in the Brigade, besides all the floats, was brought to bear on it; while the ruins subsequently demanded the attention of a small party of men for some three months further. And fires that took all we knew to get them under in ten or twelve hours were by no means of frequent occurrence. A well-seasoned timber-yard, with a nice favouring breeze blowing, might always be safely looked

to to provide us with a whole night on our hind legs.

Everything in the Brigade being of course centred in the Chief Officer, our telephones were generally pretty busy even through the quietest of nights, bringing in from the four Superintendents' stations the accounts of the current events, great and small, of the Brigade, which they in their turn had collected from their outlying stations. I don't think it need be considered surprising, therefore, that for the first month or so that I was down there I was in a continual state of jump. Every ring-up might be for some big job, and if I was taken un-awares I might miss the steamer. For the same reason, for the first few weeks of my training I always lay down to sleep on my trestle fully equipped, except for my helmet and belt. Gradually, however, as I acquired more self-confidence, I shed one garment after another, until I eventually attained to the point where I could turn in in complete fireman fashion, with nothing on but my flannel shirt and drawers, and without the slightest fear that the steamer would go on without me.

One can easily train oneself to keep that part of one's brain awake, whichever it is, that takes note of whether it is necessary for the rest of one to wake up or not,—also, I may incidentally add, to drop off to sleep at odd times when it is advisable to lay up a store of rest. These two accomplishments, together with

a fairly intimate knowledge of the shortest route from anywhere to anywhere in London, are about all the tangible results that yet remain to me of my time with the Brigade. I can always wake up, and fully wake up, whenever it is necessary; and I can always drop off to sleep whenever I want to. I have got to an age now when I sometimes drop off without wanting to; but that has got nothing to do with the present purpose.

I had the advantage over the other men that my sleeping-quarters were next to the watch-room, so that I was always aware of whatever was going on there at once. So when the message came in something to this effect, "No. 16 Clerkenwell has been called to a fire in the Gray's Inn Road, manual and steamer gone on," I merely noted it, and went on with my slumbers. Then a few minutes later, "Message from the fire in Gray's Inn Road. It is a large building of four storeys well alight. Six steamers and three stand-pipes at work;" and I began to pull myself together for the almost inevitable sequel. The officer on watch would communicate the message to the Chief or the senior on the premises for the time being, and in another minute the order would be given, "Horses for steamer," and the clicker ringing the bells in the men's rooms be pulled down. One of the watch ran to the stables to help to bring the horses out; another turned up the gas; a

third removed the gas-burner from beneath the boiler of the steamer and extinguished it, a counterpoise immediately carrying it up to the ceiling out of the way; and a fourth put the lamps on the steamer. The men came tumbling down-stairs and took their places round the steamer; the horses meanwhile had been hitched up, and the coachman had climbed to his box; the officer in charge swung himself up to the near-side brake lever; the remainder of the men followed. Then the officer pulled at the door line hanging down in front of him; the doors swung open; and we were off into the night, lighting up the fire under the boiler as we went along, within a minute, often well within it, of the giving of the order.

It is my proud boast that during the whole time that I was working with the Brigade I never missed the steamer once. My manner of proceeding was to slip into my trousers and boots, put on my helmet, and run out while still getting into my coat, with my belt, axe, and spanner hanging from my arm, leaving the finishing touches to be put to my toilet while we were going on. I wasn't by any means the only one, however, to do a good deal of dressing *al fresco*, and I have spent some minutes of the journey vainly struggling to get into my coat, until I discovered that the man sitting back to back to me was in equal difficulties with the other half of it. There were occasions when my boots had dried so

very stiff that I had to take even them out to the steamer under my arm; but it is satisfactory to be able to record that I never started without my trousers.

Barring the momentary feeling that the time is one at which all sensible people would be comfortably tucked up in their beds, turning out to a fire at two or three on a summer morning presents no great hardships. Indeed, if the summer happens to be a hot one, the general sense of freshness and revivification about the air very soon reconciles one to the loss of sleep, while there is still warmth enough about to reduce the discomfort of a wetting to a minimum. Unfortunately, however, the "devouring element," as the newspaper reporter so delights to call it, evinces, with an extraordinary want of consideration for the fireman's preferences, a marked propensity to break out most frequently during the darker and colder nights of the winter-time; and it is then that one begins to realise that the fireman's life is not exactly all clover. There is no great exhilaration to be derived from the coming straight out of the engine-house doors into a thick black fog—a darkness, like that in Egypt of old time, that may be felt, and often even seems to require being pushed against; great rolling banks of heavy sulphureous matter, of which one gets large chunks into one's mouth and throat and lungs, and chokes and gasps and strangles over, the while that the steamer is slowly

feeling its way by the curb at a pace which would do credit to a funeral *cortège*, in the vague hope of possibly arriving on the scene of the fire before it shall be too late to save anything substantial of the property or even the lives involved.

Or it may be that the world outside is all snow and ice, and that the pace has to be reduced to a minimum by reason of the unsafe condition of the streets for the horses. I will do the County Council the justice to say that, whatever else it may have left undone, it has done its duty in this respect, that when we have a fall of snow it takes it in hand at once, and does not leave it for weeks and sometimes months to disappear as it best can in the ordinary course of nature, as used to be the case under the old *régime*. But still, with the Brigade having as it does to turn out at all times and seasons without waiting for anybody, there must even now be occasions when men and horses are compelled to pursue their weary way through the deep snow before there has been opportunity to remove it, with the heavy steamer ploughing into the drifts, and perhaps the bitter north wind driving the falling flakes with a sharp sting into their faces. We got it particularly hard in the big snow-storms of January 1886. There were a lot of jobs going on at that time, and I well remember one occasion when, to add to the general pleasantness of the surroundings, a wheel of our steamer came off on Southwark Bridge, and we had to spend a

happy hour or so in the blinding snow getting her up again.

And whatever the County Council has been able to do in the matter of snow, it has not been able to overcome the disadvantages attendant on working in a hard frost. A fire with the thermometer a considerable number of degrees below freezing-point is one of the prettiest sights imaginable. The ground is very soon a sheet of ice; icicles hang from every ledge and window-sill of the burning building in spite of the furnace that is raging inside; the escapes are all outlined in ice, as though they had been designed to place on some huge Christmas-cake; and the men are more or less coated with ice, too, according to the degree of wetness they have attained. There is a certain amount of ludicrousness about it as well. Foothold is naturally difficult; and to see a dignified Superintendent suddenly sit down while in the act of giving an order to an inferior confers an air of pantomime on the proceedings which is very often rather disturbing to the equanimity of the bystanders, professionals or laymen. But it is trying work all the same. It is all very well while you can keep inside the building, and get the benefit of the fire, but as soon as you come out your clothes begin to stiffen, and your fingers to numb, and your toes to all intents and purposes cease to exist; till your whole feeling is that your very marrow is frozen to the core, and that the only hope remaining is to get some-

body to hang you up in front of a fire, on the off-chance of your gradually thawing out. The Chief once gave me the advice, as an old hand, *apropos* of the refreshments which were always served round at the close of all these long jobs, never to touch spirits east of the City Road, but to stick to the coffee. When therefore I state that at one of these hyperborean fires I once assimilated three-quarters of a tumbler of neat Houndsditch brandy at one draught, and not only lived but felt grateful for it, I don't think I need trouble to analyse my sensations any further.

There used to be a tradition amongst the men, apparently of long standing, that big fires could always be reckoned on as likely to be most plentiful in the neighbourhood of quarter-days as regarded season, and on Saturdays as regarded the days of the week. The first of these calculations was, sad to say, based upon a very poor opinion of human nature; the second on the not unnatural nor unreasonable assumption that, most warehouses and places of business being closed early on Saturday, any outbreak of fire that might occur there would have a better chance than on other days of making good headway before it was discovered. From my own researches into the subject, I am a little inclined to believe that the men had allowed themselves to generalise from the particular rather overmuch; but, be that as it may, I must candidly own that some of the fires which did take place dur-

ing or somewhere near about the fateful fifteen days subsequent to each quarter-day presented features calculated to give rise to serious misgivings on the part of the reflective. Cases of simultaneous spontaneous combustion in three separate bundles of rags in three different cupboards on three distinct landings; of full paraffin-cans having been disposed absent-mindedly upside down in the middle of floors of empty rooms, with the stoppers out; of staircases having been, no doubt also quite by mistake, washed thoroughly down with paraffin instead of water, and very imperfectly dried, — all these and other similarly extraordinary coincidences have come under my notice in my time; but if, as not unusually happened, the occupier of the premises, no doubt overcome by a sense of the imminent risk he had undergone of losing his all, had withdrawn himself temporarily from the ken of man to get over the shock, who was to openly attempt to explain the mystery, and possibly render himself guilty thereby of casting a slur on a hitherto unblemished reputation?

One of the funniest things that I can recollect in connection with a quarter-day fire was in the case of a call we had one Boxing Night to a house well alight in a street, not unknown for its historical associations, in the Borough. We were some little time on the scene before the turncock arrived; he in his turn, when he did at last show up, was some little time more before

he could find the plug; and when he had ultimately found it and got it out, there was but the barest little dribble of water behind it. The South London water arrangements very seldom were satisfactory; but that is rather beside my story. Meanwhile the house which we had come to save was merrily burning away, and by the time we did get to work there was apparently very little of it except the outside shell left.

Somewhere about that point one of the crowd of spectators which had as usual collected button-holed Mr Hutchings, the officer in charge, with the information that he believed the grandmother of the occupier was in the house upstairs. It was rather late in the proceedings to offer this information; and though Mr Hutchings did all he could to act upon it by mounting up to the top of one of the escapes and looking in at the windows to see if there was any possible chance of getting the old lady out, he had to content himself with the conclusion that she must have already long before fallen through to the ground-floor with the rest of the inflammable contents of the house, and trust that her demise had been as painless and comfortable as it could be expected to be under the circumstances.

About an hour later, when we had succeeded in getting the fire under, and were engaged in turning over the *débris* with a view to discovering anything that might be there in the shape of charred

remains, there was a little bustle amongst the crowd outside, and one of the men came in to Mr Hutchings with the news that the occupier of the house had returned and was waiting to see him. We accordingly went out to interview him, and found him within the circle that was being kept by the police, heading a little procession, consisting of his wife with a baby in her arms, a grown-up daughter, two little girls, and the supposedly missing grandmother, propped up, as became her years, between the aforesaid little girls. When Mr Hutchings and I first caught sight of them they appeared to be taking their misfortunes remarkably calmly; but as soon as the man realised who Mr Hutchings was, he raised up his voice in bitter lamentation, in which he was ably supported by the rest of his family, that "it was 'ard on a bloke as 'e couldn't take the missus and 'is grannie and the kids out to the pantermime without findin' 'is 'ome gone when 'e got back." Mr Hutchings sympathised with the bereaved outcasts as far as time and circumstances could permit, but business is business; and so, without any more unnecessary delay, he proceeded to put the usual questions to the head of the family as to the extent and nature of the premises, the names of himself and his landlord, &c. When he came to the inquiry, "Were the premises insured?"—

"Oh yes!" replied the man without a moment's hesitation;

"I've got the policy in my pocket"!

And he then and there produced it. Mr Hutchings' private comment to me, as we returned home on the steamer, was that we didn't always say all that we thought, which of course might have meant anything.

I think the grandest fire I ever attended was the one I have already referred to, in the coffee warehouses at Wapping. At first it was only confined to one end of the block, and early in the morning we had it well in hand, and the steamers were beginning to make up and go home, leaving a small force to finish off the job with stand-pipes. Then some idiotic busy-body of an outsider, it was supposed, went through the building, leaving the fireproof doors open; and in a few more minutes the whole block, filled with jute sacks as it was, was in a blaze from end to end, presenting the appearance of a vast Jubilee illumination. Everything had of course to be got to work again; and the next thing that happened was that the whole of the riverside front fell bodily outwards in one piece, like the front of a doll's house, sinking the nearest float through sheer weight of bricks, and only giving the men just time to jump for their lives into the water as they saw the wall coming. A huge column of flame shot up into the air high enough to be seen for miles round London; and after that all the fat was in the fire,

so to speak, and there was nothing left to be done except to go stolidly on pouring tons of water on to the ruin and prevent the fire getting on to do further mischief in the neighbourhood.

A somewhat curious feature of that fire was that for some hours, when things were at their worst, the gutters were running with the most delicious-looking *café noir*. The water, entering the building in comparatively fine streams as it did from the branches, naturally got boiled almost immediately, and then, percolating the coffee-sacks from top to bottom, took all the strength out of them, and came away in the form stated. I can't say I tried the inviting beverage myself,—I had my suspicions that it might not be all that it appeared,—but a good many persons in the crowd did, and I understood that they found it quite to their taste.

Incidentally I may mention that I was as near coming to an untimely end on that occasion as I have ever been in my life. I was with another man in charge of a branch some little way inside the building on the ground-floor. The warehouses being, as I have already intimated, constructed on the fireproof system, there was a good deal of iron about, amongst the rest a quantity of cast-iron pillars supporting the several floors, which by this time were pretty well red-hot. We had got the fire comfortably surrounded on both the land and the water

sides by now, and where my comrade and I were working we could see the deliveries from two or three other branches better than the men who were in charge of them probably could, and that they were impinging uncomfortably close to more than one of these pillars. My mate sang out to the man on our right to keep his water more to the right, so as to be clear of a pillar—but it was too late; smack came the water on to the pillar: there was a loud snap, as of a stick of glass breaking, and a rumbling and a tumbling up above us. My companion remarked, "I'm off!" I replied, "So am I!" We dropped the branch like a hot potato, and bolted clear of the building like a couple of rabbits. When we turned to see if we could do anything to get the branch out, the place where we had been standing was filled choke up to the doorway with coffee-sacks. I am not going into a digression here on the merits or demerits of modern fireproof buildings; all I will say is, that they are uncommonly nasty places when they have got a fire in them.

I was present at three of the fires which took place on the premises of that unfortunate benefactor of his race, Mr Whitely, and practically burnt him completely out every time. The place, like most others of its kind, was almost as good as certain to go in its entirety once a fire started inside, the numerous communications between departments and floors necessi-

tated by the business gratuitously lending themselves to the spread of the flames, not to speak of the enormous amount of ready-made fuel afforded by the nature of the goods stored there: and though between the second and third occasions that I attended Mr Whitely had been to the expense of having iron doors put up throughout. When, after the third fire was over, I accompanied the Chief through the building, everything was clean gone again, except the iron doors, which were standing up on their own ends amongst the desolation, like the gates in an Irish landscape. A rather pretty sight was presented at that last fire, by the way, in the shape of the lady *employées*, who had been tumbled out from their dormitories above the shops into the street in all stages of *déshabille*; and I couldn't help appreciating to some extent Lord Eldon's feelings when, on a somewhat similar occasion, the place where he had hidden the Great Seal went entirely out of his head.

My luck with regard to really sensational fires, such as at theatres and the like, was not very great. Of big jobs I saw plenty, but very few of them were of a kind the memory of which is likely to endure outside the Brigade itself and the immediate circle of those concerned in the loss. I was present at two events, however, which, though they can hardly be classed as big fires, were of sufficient importance to take their place in the history of the time. I mean the dynamite outrages

at the Tower and Westminster Hall, which both took place on the same morning. When we got to the Tower the fire was practically all over; but the arms were lying about all scattered and broken, the trophies had been blown off the walls, and portions of the ceiling had come down; there was a great hole yawning in the floor, and the windows of the Banqueting Hall were all blown out; the flagstaff was blown away, and the clock had its face blown out. I remember its striking me at the time, however, that the dynamiters would have been wiser to experiment on some other building, for very little, if any, further damage was done to the structure. People didn't jerry-build when that was put up.

While we were waiting for further orders, word was brought of the additional explosions in Westminster Hall and the House of Commons, and I went on there with the Chief in his van. By the time we got there, however, there was nothing to be seen but a huge hole at the foot of the staircase, and some of the windows broken, and the poor policeman who by his bravery had averted so much of the worst effects of the explosion being tended on the floor till the ambulance came to fetch him away. He was fearfully mangled, poor fellow; but it is satisfactory to think that he lived to reap the reward of his self-sacrifice to duty. Inside the House of Commons there was a complete wreck, the benches being all torn up and lying about,

as if the members had been bear-fighting.

We also turned out to the explosion under London Bridge, the circumstances of which remain a mystery to this day. The bomb was apparently placed on a ledge under the spring of the arch, but did no particular harm. From certain fragmentary portions of attire which the police found on the same ledge, it has been supposed that the perpetrator of the attempted outrage got blown up himself; and, for my own part, I devoutly hope that such was the case.

Fires involving loss of, or risk to, life on the part of the sufferers did not come in our way very much, but of course amongst the home calls which we got there were a few of these here and there. I think the most terrible job at which I attended was that at which the poor servant-girl Alice Ayres lost her life under such sad circumstances. It was at an oil-shop in Southwark that the fire took place, and by the time we got there the shop itself was a burning fiery furnace, throwing out a blast of heat that scorched the very hair on one's head when one approached nearer than the other side of the street. The owner's wife and her boy must have succumbed almost at once to the smoke and heat: poor Alice, when we came up, was engaged in dropping the children out of the second-floor windows to the firemen below. She had got all three of them out safely, and then her own turn came. The jumping-sheet by that time

had been prepared for her, and climbing out on to the window-sill, she made ready to jump. Probably the exertion of saving her master's children from the midst of all that pungent suffocating smoke had exhausted her, for when she did jump, it was short. She caught on the lintel projecting above the shop, turned over, and, missing the sheet, fell heavily on the pavement, mortally injured. She was picked up and carried away to hospital at once, but nothing could be done to save her, and she died in a few hours, every bit as much a martyr to duty as any soldier on the battlefield.

There was another death at that fire—that of the owner of the shop himself. He, poor fellow, died a martyr to his anxiety for his money. He had been reported as having escaped; but when the fire was over, nothing could be learnt of his whereabouts, till Mr Hutchings and I, while going over the house, found him with his legs entangled in the rungs of the ladder leading from the attic floor to the roof, head downwards, and charred to a cinder, but with his cash-box, which he had evidently gone back into the house to fetch, still firmly gripped under his arm. He had no doubt found his retreat by the stairs cut off, and attempting to escape by the roof, had found the trap-door locked, and so perished. Maybe it was his all that was in the cash-box, so there is no need to think too hardly of him.

One or two of the injuries

that I have seen incurred in the course of fires have been quite uncalled for. For instance, on one occasion we got a call for a room on fire about a hundred yards from the station. We were there in about two minutes; and, on entering the door, were immediately encountered by a heavy body that had been violently hurled down the stairs, and nearly threw the lot of us off our legs. This missile in question proved to be the aged and dropsical father of a family: the fire proved to be nothing more than a window-curtain alight; but the old gentleman's four stalwart sons, believing it to be the right thing to do under the circumstances, had heaved him down, preparatory to taking any other steps to remedy the mischief. I believe he was rather badly hurt as the result, and had to go to hospital: whether he subsequently recovered I know not. Another very flagrant case of misplaced energy was that of an old lady, who was so much overcome by the alarm of a fire four or five doors away from her down a mews that she deliberately opened her bedroom window and jumped out, thereby incurring a severe compound fracture!

I am sorry that I cannot claim to have ever saved anybody's life, or anything more important than a stuffed chimpanzee, which I brought down from the upper storey of a taxidermist's in Oxford Street. I really forget why I did it, as it was, strictly speaking, the

Salvage Corps' business: probably it was by way of some joke with the other men. At anyrate I never got any credit for it; and the strict rules of the Brigade forbade my even getting the chimpanzee to keep.

In spite of my having attended in my time something like four hundred fires, I was lucky enough to come off without being badly hurt once. The worst that ever happened to me was to fall some ten or twelve feet off an escape, breaking the force of my descent on the top of Mr Port's—the officer in charge of Headquarters—helmet, and cut my knee rather badly: the result being that I got a touch of blood-poisoning, and my leg swelled to such an extent that I couldn't get on my clothes for a fortnight; and, to my intense chagrin, was thereby debarred from being present at the Paternoster Row fire, one of the biggest jobs of its time. I once was nearly drowned in the basement of a warehouse in Cheapside. I had gone

down the steps leading to it, and seeing a lot of packing-cases sticking up three parts out of the water that had collected there, supposed that the floor was only submerged some three or four inches, and accordingly stepped boldly off what I took to be the bottom step into about six feet of the treacherous fluid. I was fortunately hauled out immediately by the scruff of the neck, like a terrier, by a man who was following me; otherwise, with my long boots and all, I should have stood a very poor chance. Another time I stumbled into a jam-vat in the Borough, and though I was carefully scraped down and put to soak, I was painfully conscious of smelling like a school feast for weeks afterwards. But I never broke a limb, or my neck, as my relations were so fond of prophesying I would. I won't say that they wished it; but I am not at all sure that in their secret hearts they weren't rather disappointed that I didn't.

G. NUGENT-BANKES.

THE CONQUEST OF CHARLOTTE.¹

PART I.—MY LEGACY OF FAMILY HISTORY.

CHAPTER IV.—THE BLOSSOMING OF THE RASCAL.

THE cast shoe was the pivot of all their fortunes. The Nether Bowes couple, it seems, did not miss it on Charlotte's return; nor did they note her flustered condition, caused by her fright, and the race along the shore, and anxiety about concealing the whole matter, if it could be concealed, or of explaining it if it could not. The gloaming sheltered her; but indeed her true cloak was their own alarm, woven of Rab's whistle and stave of song that Sunday morning. The moment she entered, Charlotte was aware of something amiss: they wore it like a mourning; and having no inkling of its cause, she imagined that the news of her morning's dallying in the Silver Wood, if not of her whole day's truancy, must have reached the Back Bowes before her.

Her mind was soon put at ease of that alarm. It was Rab's habit of a Sunday night to call in upon the Seton household on his way back to St Brise. That was only friendly, for his way lay past their door. At such times Charlotte and he were wonderfully indifferent to each other, or affected to be so: whether that was easier after the meetings earlier in the day in the Silver Wood,

let you lovers say. To-night, while it was still long before his customary hour of coming, Aunt Janet took Charlotte aside and warned her that Rab must not show face there that night.

"He shamed us all to-day," she said, and told Charlotte how. Charlotte's own performance, ranged alongside Rab's in the light of Janet's and James's displeasure, did not look very pretty; whereupon she conceived that a great injustice was being done to Rab, and, with a glowing pity for him at her heart, set forth to warn him from the Nether Bowes.

We are to suppose that Rab little needed the pity, and that he cared for it less, for he made a great laugh at the affair. That way of taking it suited Charlotte's present mind; it threw a shade or two of grey into her own blackness, which kept comparing itself with Rab's. All the same, that way of taking it would not do with James and Janet, when they made the discovery of her offence, which might be any minute; and, try as she would, it was with a poor show of Rab's lightness that she recounted to him her own doings of the day.

¹ Copyright, 1901, by Dodd, Mead, & Co., in the United States of America.

Her decline—obedience to the call of an outward-bound ship from the hill of Cluny, and the delicious paddling in the romantic waves—was easily understood by Rab: therein she was like a piece of himself. I gather that even thus early he had begun to know himself; later, the rascal showed that he could read himself like a book. When she came to the escapade of the yellow rocks, with its answering signal of the sea-gull's note, and the barefoot flight along the shore, Rab hummed and whistled so mightily that she fancied that her sin must be blacker even than her fear of being found out had painted it.

Then he began to examine her about the adventure. He made an especial point of the beach being empty save of herself and the black-a-vised men.

"No other grievous revolters among the people?"

She was certain that no one saw her save these two, unless, of course— Hey! Rab was laughing at her! But—but—and here ever was the sting of the story—she had left her shoe behind on the sand. It was a witness to her decline for any who cared to precognosce it.

"And the men? What were they like?" Rab continued with his questioning, ignoring the shoe and all its consequences. "A black-a-vised man" (as she had told him, and he filled in the portrait) "cracked with years, and a cloak hunched round his shoulders, making him look like a cockroach on its hind-legs?"

"That's the man," Charlotte

cried, startled by the sight of him again, called up by Rab's description.

"And the other lad—the handsome one?"

Now that she thought of it, he was familiar somehow,—she seemed to have cast eyes on him before.

"Passing through the Bowes in a cadger's cart," Rab suggested.

"Yes, yes," Charlotte cried again. "And you know him, Rab? And, maybe, he knows me, and will bring the shoe to the Nether Bowes, and then— What's a bit whistle to bidin' away from the kirk all day?"

"You may well ask," cries Rab in great glee, until Charlotte got into a fever at the thought of it. Then he comforted her with a gallant resolution—or so she read it.

"I ken the two ne'er-do-weels brawly," he said. "Smuggling rascals both. I'll get back your shoe for ye."

At word of smugglers she was in a flare of concern. She would fifty times rather the loss of her shoe and the discovery of her truancy, of her tryst even, than that he should risk his life with the bold and wicked smuggler. But he just crowed at her. She didn't know the bold smuggler. He was a poor creature. Once he was a man, and would have cut a hatchet down your backbone as soon as look at you. But if she knew him now, as well as he knew him, she wouldn't count him a snap—which was true. Besides, the smugglers as likely as not would never touch her shoe. It would have leave to lie on the sands until

the tide came up and washed the dainty thing away. The tide wasn't full till two o'clock that morning. He knew that. He noticed most things, he said, and crowed again. And the moon was full early, and if he were quick—if she could forbear delaying their adieux now: "Morning's our time for a particular *tête-à-tête*, but then we're a queer pair"—who knew but that he could recover her shoe still by the light o' the moon. And to-morrow night—never mind how—or the next night at worst, if she would mak' an errand to the Silver Wood she would find it in yon fork of the fir where the chaffinch sat on eggs. Never mind how it was to be there: there it should be. And now—ae fond kiss, and he was off on his adventure.

With that she had to be content. And, indeed, for the moment it comforted her pride greatly that the shoe might be hers again, and that the discovery of her day's ill-doing should rest on the slender cord of a chance inquiry by some of their neighbours about her absence from the kirk.

Now my father, who was in the Excise, as you have been told, was at this time an officer at St Brise, and likely to remain there, or on the same level somewhere else, unless his own exertions took him a step higher. Marriage with Miss Grace Trail, which he was etting for at this time, might have lifted him—and ultimately it did; but so far fortune had favoured that match little, and Mr Trail, Miss Grace's father, had not favoured it at all. So it seemed that

advance lay with his own exertions. Most folk, and Rab was one of them at that time I conceive, took Mr Shirra for a dense man; whereas he was only an awkward, who saw and hoped for much,—wherein, I am told, I take after him.

"True, true; you're like him i' the head," Rab said to me once in after-days. "Your father was a fell clever man wi' his head; but he wasna very happy in his manner."

He had, indeed, a way of hitting upon the right thing, but of coming at it so unskillfully that men put down his discernment to his luck. It ill became Rab to labour that point. It was my father's fortune to have that vagabond's unusual wit set against his own in most of his enterprises—his ill-fortune. It began with this affair of Black Veitch, and the two played a game of checkers all their days.

Most of my knowledge of the Black Veitch affair was gathered from my father's lips, and they were unwilling. It came out in random shafts of bitterness against Rab—not the best way of getting at the truth. Yet, I daresay, I have the strings of the story.

Some whisper had gone abroad about the sea-gull's signal, and it came to my father's ears and seemed a happy find for him, especially as he and the coastguard were in a rivalry for the catching of Black Veitch and his gang. Their doings were notorious, and whichever of the officers should steal a march upon the other in their capture was certain of a feather in his cap, and

a round sum in his pocket to keep it oiled.

I suppose, too, that there was an informer, as usual, and that my father had bought him for his own ear. At any rate, he came to know where this particular cargo was to be landed, and the vessel that was to bring it, and even the vessel's whereabouts off the coast. So, when Rab reached St Brise on the Sunday night, or rather towards the Monday morning, and made down to the shore (for Charlotte's shoe—but he went very warily, whatsoever his reason may have been, and it may have been habit only), he came plump upon my father and his men. But for his wariness, he must have discovered himself to them, for the moonlight still lay on the shore: as it was, he made a clean survey of their disposition, and with his knowledge could understand its meaning,—my father and the main body well hid by the yellow rocks, where (so my father's information was) the cargo was to be floated, with outposts at the doo-cot to the westwards and on the footpaths above where they led to the landward road. All this Rab, out in the moonlight hunting Charlotte's shoe, had discovered a good two hours before the tide was at flood; and long ere that, be sure, Black Veitch had it all at his fingers' end, and had changed his course accordingly.

My father and his men lay listening for the noise of the oars. It was a quiet night, and the sound came just when and where they expected it—

towards the flood-tide when the moon died, and away out in a line with the tail of the rocks. By-and-by it ceased, and that also they had expected; but not that when it began again, it should be short and choppy and yet fainter, as if the boat, wheresoever it was, had changed its tack. Then, too, the man at the doo-cot slipped down to tell my father that he had seen a flash well to the eastward, towards Torrie Town, and by the time he reached the main body they had all seen it, and heard—so it seemed—the sea-gull's note faintly from that airt. But my father, being cock-sure, I suppose, in his information, which he had kept to himself, and proud of how he had laid his plans, would not budge. And in a little, to justify him it appeared, the *ki-ak* sounded from the rocks more immediate to them. And so it kept sounding, coming nearer if anything, but slowly; and my father gave the order to lie low, which was done even until the tide was on the ebb again. But no seizure was made. Then my father was got to believe that the game was up for that night. He had been outwitted; and it was characteristic of him, for he was given to bursts of heat, that by a sudden command he spread his men along the shore, and among the rocks, and through the wood inland beyond them to the main road, with orders to take man, woman, and child they should find, and bring them to him.

And, by-and-by, those down on the shore came upon Rab

walking very gingerly over the wet beach and carrying a shoe in his hand.

Rab, of course, had a fine story ready on his tongue's tip. I have never known him without one. He had come down to the beach to pick up a shoe that was lost. It was a leddy's shoe. He repeated that tale when they brought him before my father where he stood fuming by the outgoing tide at the yellow rocks.

"And there—they could see for themselves—he had found the shoe. Whose? Ah," and he made a mighty man-o'-the-world mystery over that.

"Doubtless," said he, with a turn of his eye that took in the whole band, but pivoted on my father,—“doubtless some of you ken how inconvenient it is at times, and how delicate, to mention a lady's name.”

This was a thrust at my father, of whom the town's gossip had it that some nights before he had boggled at toasting his mistress,—I think because (but I never knew the rights of the story) her father, the Provost, was of the company.

There was a kind of snigger among some of the band, which whipped up Rab's impudence like a top.

"I'm not ashamed of my trade," he continued; "but I'll not say that it finds favour wi' the lassie's people."

"I ken your trade fine," cries my father, all heated. A dull man, they called my father: he was the first of all that countryside, it seems, to read Rab to the bottom. "I ken your trade

fine," he cries, "and mine is to catch you at it. To-morrow I'll have ye before the bailies."

"To-morrow I'm at your service," says Rab; "to-night still, I'll not deny, I ha'e business wi' her whose name is no' to be mentioned." And he passed the shoe again under my father's eyes. "I'm happy to say that her folks haven't found out our little ploy yet."

"By God!" says my father, "to-morrow I'll cage ye."

"I'm thinking," says Rab, "that in the meantime some other bird's escaping you."

And, surely enough, at the moment he spoke, the *ki-ak* sounded far to the east again, and a flash sprang up among the rocks there.

My father drew off his men and hurried them all eastwards, and Rab was left alone. He mounted among the bushes above the shore, and watched the lights flash fainter and fainter, beyond Torrie Town. By-and-by the sound of oars from Torrie Bay reached him, and with a chuckle he struck northwards on the Back Bowes road.

The next day the town was in a ferment about the smuggling case. It was known that Mr Shirra in the Excise had been outwitted, and the folks were not sorry, and still less surprised; but they cocked their ears at word of Rab's connection with the affair. As the week wore on, more and more of them kept coming lounging about Eben's shop, where Rab sat with extra clever things on his clean lips, while

Eben watched him from the corner of his eyes.

Mr Shirra had laid an information against Rab before the Provost and bailies. So far as Provost Trail was concerned, my father might have spared his breath; and there is no reason why I should beat about the bush in telling why. Of course, there was his opposition to Mr Shirra's courting of his daughter; but in truth that was little more than an outcome and corollary of the other thing I am aiming at. He had a very deep interest in these ventures of Mr Black Veitch. Some people in the Provost's place would have welcomed a family tie with my father. An interest in the Excise would have been a fine reserve string to his bow in the event of the other strings playing him false. But the Provost was not of that kind. He was a man of sicear spirit, and he showed it, not only in making no terms with the enemy, but in taking his steps so that he needed not to make them. If Black Veitch had turned king's evidence on any day, it would have puzzled him to discover Mr Trail's hand in any of his dealings.

But if the Provost pooh-poohed my father's story, and not without some flouts at my father's intelligence, the bailies were eager to take the matter up. It was close upon the 'Thirties now, when suspicion of well-stated authority seemed the likeliest qualification for municipal office. So in a quiet colleaguig way behind the Provost's back, the bailies and

one or two of the councillors set about probing the affair deep.

One thing they found that looked ugly: Rab's landlady testified that on that Sunday night he had not come in before she fell asleep; and thinking to shelter Rab, she had added, "but that was nothing by-ordnar." The bailies seized upon this, and drew from her that Rab was aye a late bird. When they and Mr Shirra came bursting west to Eben's shop and tackled Rab with this admission, the rascal answered that he could have told them all that himself, and indeed had done so.

"I was late," he said, "finding the shoe, as I told Mr Shirra there; and as I told Mr Shirra, too, I had to return the shoe that night, and return it I did."

Perhaps, Rab added, seeing Mr Shirra had such a wonderful short memory that he forgot that, he could maybe sharpen his recollection by recalling various civilities that passed between them.

"Whose shoe was it?" cried my father, flushing hotly.

"You'll pardon me, gentlemen," says Rab, turning to the bailies with a laugh in his mouth, "but that's my business."

As to the matter of use-and-wont lateness, "I'm a kind o' romantic lad," he explained, "for all that I'm just a tailyer," at which Eben looked at him sharply again, "and fond o' communing wi' Nature. In fact, I can think o' nothing more entertaining, unless it be a crack wi' the bailies."

"Rab," cried Eben, tired of the suspicion likely to rest upon his shop, "you'll either redd up this matter, or you'll march."

Ha! the rascal was keen enough to clear it up, but at his own time and in his own way. How far before this he was in the Provost's confidence, or the Provost was in his, I cannot say; but now, at any-rate, I know, though it was not suspected by any then, there was a great deal of laying of heads together between them up at the Provost's house of nights. Did you know them as I do, you would laugh to think of these two confederates, so disproportioned in years, playing at the exchange of confidences. I think it very unlikely that the Provost gave Rab one single hint to fasten on; and just as unlikely that Rab needed one hint to aid him to the knowledge of all the Provost's secrets. They were well-matched wits, though Rab was to prove the keener.

I have heard Rab on the subject in later days.

"D'ye ken, Dauvit," he said, "between the Provost, who died highly respected and is lying up i' the auld kirkyard there with a mighty load o' ill-designed granite on top of him, — between him and me, whose end, I mak' bold to say, you believe likely to be lamentable, there was just this great difference, — I've been honest to myself. You'll not understand it, Dauvit, being yourself one of the dying-respected order. Huts! You're angry. There's room for all kinds, man; and i'

faith in this assembly of a world them that come masked are given most elbow-room. My consistent way o' living is the same thing as that grand essential symmetry in music which you have heard Mr Parabo discoursing about with that feckless artist would-be son-in-law o' mine, Richard Clephane. I tell ye, sir, it's not a question o' morals, — of good respectable living, which is just accidental morality. It's a question o' 'Have ye the gift? D'ye feel yourself standing outside the world, uplifted like, an' seeing it whole, like a diorama at the Kirktown market?' The man that has that gift, lad, is an artist, and I tell you, if he's true to it, he'll be a kind o' vagabond all his days."

"Then I'm glad I haven't the gift, Rab," says I.

"Perfectly, Dauvit, perfectly; that's a sentiment that throws a light on the whole question."

That chatter of Rab's is beyond my comprehension, which is exactly what Rab said; but it needs no special wit to see that he was goading these persistent bodies of bailies into having him up before them, and to guess the reason why. It was mischief partly, doubtless; just a wicked delight in fooling them in public. But there was always roguery behind his roguishness. He had up his sleeve a trump-card, to be played before all the world; rather than keep it there, I declare, he would have shamed his mother.

On the famous—nay, notorious—day of the Blossoming of the Rascal, the most distin-

guished man in the court, and all St Brise was there, was the lad in the dock. The bailies looked down from the bench a little shiftily, for Rab's head had a confident, jerky throw-back, like a red gamecock's, as his glance travelled, full of secret, from them to Provost Trail. The Provost, in his usual coat of blue and brass, and yellow waistcoat, watching the fun from the outskirts of the crowd, edged away from Rab's eye, it was so familiar; so that in the dim light of the courtroom he was like a vari-coloured shadow moving on the wall. There had been no talk of his defending Rab himself, though he was a lawyer, his business being above bailie-court work. Nor could he have done it so well as the friend of Rab's choice, one Rolland, the Writer, a new-comer who had attached himself to Rab almost from the first day of his entering the town,—by a kind of freemasonry, I suppose, for this was his first case in a long career of getting rogues out of scrapes by the skin of their teeth.

And over against Rolland, of course, was my father, poor cock-sure man, deep in his life-long business of trying to sharpen his wits on that rascal Rab, and confident of succeeding. He had got some fresh evidence, the knowledge of which gave a crow to his voice as he went through the old story of connecting Rab with the shore, and the landing of a cargo somewhere on it. A load of the illicit stuff, he explained, had been discovered in a disused quarry in the Porter's

Brae, which was to the east of the road to the Bowes, and that very day a witness had come forward who had seen Rab in the neighbourhood of the quarry on the Sunday night. And my father called Thomas Crummles, the herd on Milton.

I question if, excepting Rab, there was a man in court who knew Tam when he stepped into the witness-box that day. In my time, a score of years later, he was "The Philanderer,"—a bye-thing to everybody's hand, a reprobate token in the exchange of the town's humours. And he first went out of his course on the day he testified against Rab. My God! It makes me ill to think how many ships may have been lost through being signalled by that rascally barque.

Before the bailies Tam told his story plainly enough—with a glibness of tongue, indeed, which may have been his weapon as a Philanderer, for in no wise else did he look the part. He had in his tending some sheep in fields that Milton took from Gospetry, and on the Sunday night, or rather the next morning—it was nearer four than three o'clock—he had left them and was walking homewards along the Bowes road, and was close to where the St Brise road cut it, when he heard voices. A minute later, or maybe two, just as he arrived at the crossing, a man came up from the Porter's Brae and turned past him into the road to the Bowes, and he recognised that it was Rab Quick. He could not be mistaken, dusky light as it was,—

it wasn't the figure that he recognised so much as a bit whistle that came from the teeth of it. "I would ken Rab Cuick's whistle amang a million," Tam said. So sure was he of his man that he had cried out, "Good morning, Rab!" but Rab had paid no more heed to him than just to stop his whistle and hurry on. By-and-by, when about half-way up the Brae to the quarry, he heard voices again, and behind him, on the Bowes road he thought, the sound of a sea-gull—a queer beast to be screeching at that time o' day—and immediately two or three figures scrambled out of the quarry-hole against the streak of light in the east, and there was a sound of wheels, till all was quiet. It was himself who found the stuff in the quarry, a day or two later, of which they had heard tell from Mr Shirra.

Taken with what had gone before, it was a damning enough piece of evidence, and the bailies nodded, and the blue shadow slipped round the wall uneasily to get a glimpse of how Rab was taking it. And that rascal's white teeth were laughing in Rolland's ear as he got up to cross-examine Tam.

The lawyer had understood Tam to say that he was out that night on his duties as the Milton herd. It was so, Tam said. And when he had first heard the voices he was on the road between Gospetry and the cross-roads at the Porter's Brae—somewhere, probably, near the by-road leading to the manse of Bogie?

"The same," said Tam,

"Now, Thomas," said Rolland, "will you swear—on your oath, remember—will you swear that it was the Milton sheep, and not Nelly Moyes in Bogie manse, that was your errand that night?"

Tam swore to heaven that it was the sheep, and with a red-faced vehemence that sent a ripple of laughter over the court, that broke in a little guffaw in the Provost's corner.

"So you tell the court," continues Rolland, "that you had not visited the manse-kitchen, and had the misfortune to be detained beyond elders' hours?"

"That was in the outgoing," roared Tam, his gills matching his red hair.

In the middle of the laughter, I believe, my father got up to protest against this line of questioning; but these were indiscreet and humorsome days, and the bailies would not have missed the scandal for the conviction of a dozen Rabs.

"So! It was on your road to see your sheep that you paid a visit to the manse. And you were late of leaving—wearing on to midnight. How did you leave, by the way? Was it by the front door, or the back?"

Tam fidgeted and fumed on a change of legs.

"Out with it, Thomas," Rolland bullied him. "But perhaps you don't remember how you left?"

"I have gude reason to mind it," Tam blurted.

So he had, to his dying day. Rab was prompting Rolland with questions now so loudly that the lawyer did not need to repeat them. The court-room

was dissolved in laughter that anticipated the joke. Only the blue shadow on the wall bit his fingers on his smile, observing Rab keenly: this lad was discovering himself overly clever for a confederate. And poor Tam, in torment on his stand, like a goose on a hot gridiron, boggled over the story of his philandering: how the minister's wife, thinking that she heard strange voices, had come to the kitchen, and Nelly and the other wench had pushed Tam out of sight into the

poultry-house adjoining, from which he had only escaped through a window in the loft. His entry set the hens and ducks clucking and quacking.

"What ails the ducks the night, Nelly?" her mistress had asked; and "Oh! it'll be a strange drake among them," answered the other maid.

"That'll do for the Philanderer," cried Rolland; and, after the roar with which this story filled the court,—

"Call Miss Charlotte Seton of the Back Bowes."

CHAPTER V.—RAB CUICK'S CHARLOTTE.

Her pale face trembled as she entered; and for a moment she shrank back upon old Robin Cook and my uncle James, who were following her in. Her gaze fluttered round the court till it rested on Rab; then, at sight of where he stood, a flush mounted to her brows.

"It was all my fault," she cried, and pushed forward to beneath the bailies' bench.

To this day, all St Brise can tell so much of what they call "the witnessing of Rab Cuick's Charlotte."

Rolland handed her into the box, and with a knavish wit bade her speak simply what she knew.

"The Sabbath before last," she said, "I was late in getting to St Brise. The bells had rung in, and instead of going to the kirk I went down to the shore past the harbour, and waded along to the rocks. And when I was wading, I heard the sound of a sea-gull,

and—and it minded me o' something — and I gave the note back without thinking, and there on the rocks above me was a black-a-vised man, and I ran to St Brise. As I ran another started up alongside of me, and I ran harder, and when I got to St Brise it was without one of my shoes, and I had to go home without it."

Rolland put her a question as she hesitated.

"And did you recover your shoe, Miss Seton?"

"I told you already that Rab Cook got it for me," she answered, facing the lawyer. "You see,"—she turned to the bailies,— "when I got back to the Bowes, I told Rab the adventure of my losing it; and he said that as soon as he got down to St Brise that night he would seek my shoe on the shore, and I was to look in the Silver Wood, the next day or the next, in the tree where the

chaffinch nests, and I would find it. And so I did. On the Monday forenoon I went to the wood, and there was my shoe. They were my Sabbath shoes, and I have them on now.

"And I'm sorry," she said,—she turned to the Rascal, and the blue shadow on the wall shook,—“it was kind o’ you, Rab, and I’m sorry I’ve got you into trouble.”

“It wasn’t you that brought me here, Chatty, or brought you either, but just your ain ungallant freend, Mr Shirra . . .”

“Tush!” cried Rolland over his shoulder. “Let me ask you one more question, Miss Charlotte. Have you ever seen or spoken to Mr Cook here since that Sunday night?”

“Rab? No!” answered Charlotte. “I wasn’t allowed out last Sabbath.”

Her own words tore the veil from her own eyes, helped, perhaps, by a little laugh that went round the court at the thought of that fine gracious lassie under any Back Bowes thumb—Uncle James’s thumb, for example. In a flash she had explored the whole course of events to their fountain, as she thought—this narrow religion of her uncle and aunt, against which something in her had always revolted. That was why they were ill at Rab’s bit whistle. That was why she minded the loss of her shoe; why Rab, for the finding of it, was standing in the dock. That was why—the blood leapt in her with a new inspired pride—why she, her consecrated self, stood veiled

for the sport of this burgh crowd.

I have but a dim glimpse of her feeling, for my nature is not like hers; but my own Charlotte’s is, and every day now that wonderful country is revealed to me.

“Is that all?” she cried, with the imperiousness of the woman awakened.

The new note, and the sight of her so haughtily transfigured, startled the court, from the bailies to the scum at the door, and she had to repeat her question ere they told her she might go. Rolland sought to assist, but she set him back with a look. The blue shadow had flitted through the crowd to the foot of the steps. When the Provost held out his hand to help her down, she glanced at him for a second, and then took it. God knows I like neither him nor his kind; but there was a touch of quality in him that brought him nearer than any of us to Charlotte at that moment.

Even old Robin, her greatest friend and confidant in the Back Bowes, disaffected her now. They were standing in the street behind the courthouse waiting for Rab, whose acquittal was certain. Up the wynd from the street came the hum of the town’s tongues, and by an instinct she knew her name was the refrain of it.

“We’ll go home, uncle,” she cried.

“Won’t you wait and see Rab?” asked Robin.

“No, no, no,” she cried, and set off on the road to Back Bowes.

James followed, with the thought that it was a regenerate sign to see her so ashamed of herself; but gradually something in her gait as she dragged him at her heels made him doubt if her shamedness was of the kind he had in mind, and he panted on with a "gey queer thing" trembling on his lips.

On the grassy knowe above Cluny, she took off her Sabbath shoes. Uncle James, all spent with the climb, sat down beside her. Once more her eyes fell upon the Firth, of blue and green inlay, and on the ships far out with their sails set for the silver streak that shot into the North Sea. The sight of them startled afresh her proud and perturbed spirit.

"Why did you take me there? Why? Why?" she cried, leaping to her feet, and James, looking up at her with his hand on his side, thought the girl was mad.

"It was your own misdoing," was all he could say.

She looked at him for a moment; then she dropped on her knees at his side. The stupid honest man looked about him in wonder and alarm: all was hushed and still, the long shadows lying sleepily on the grass and gorse, and the sharp salt breeze from the sea filling the air here without a murmur.

"Was it misdoing?" she asked. "Then why does not my heart tell me of it?"

He laid a hand upon her, gently.

"You do not understand me?" she said.

"I don't understand you,

Charlotte,' he answered. "But we'll get home to Janet."

Following my Uncle James and Charlotte some three hours later came old Robin Cook on an errand of comfort—seeking it at the same source. The day had become more exciting after they had left him—its revelations following one another so fast that his mind was dazzled, and kept winking over them still. The bailies had given young Rab a handsome acquittal wherewith to cock his beaver, and some advice about not doing it again to vex the lug beneath it. The Provost, taking the occasion of handing Charlotte out of court, had crept away to his own house. My father I can fancy making use of a backdoor way, the thought of his mistress and promotion farther off than ever gnawing inside him. Rab was escorted down the Townhouse steps by a riff-raff crowd hoarse-throated in gratulation: he would know how little triumph there was in that, or if he did not he was soon to learn. Once on the pavement, he could see the respectable craft cruising about the High Street opposite, preserving between him and them the wide berth of the causeway. Presently Eben Smith hailed him.

"You needn't mind coming back to my shop," he said.

"But I'm acquit," cried Rab.

"Honourably acquit," said Eben. "All the same I haven't a board for you."

Rab was himself again in a twinkling.

"Man, I'm sorry to hear

that," he cries. "I knew that these ill-fitting hose and things you have been sending home o' late had done you no guid, but I never thought your trade was leaving you so fast as all that."

The little tailor came dancing round Rab in a fury, swearing out of his big beard that no ill-fitting clothes had left his shop in all the six-and-twenty years he had sewed in it.

"Well, well," said Rab. "I shouldn't have whispered a word about it—and in front of so many of your customers, too" (nodding over his shoulder at the ragged ne'er-do-weels behind him)—"so long as you had need o' me. Though, Heaven kens, I've been tired for many a day of the poor class of work that comes your way."

Eben stopped in his protestations, and laughed.

"Rab Cuick," he said, "I'm afraid you're a bad rascal."

The rascal shook himself clear of the lousy crowd with a chirrup, and crossed over to the tailor.

"Therein, Mr Eben," he said, "you misjudge mankind, I think."

"Not you, at any rate."

"So be it. Each one plays his cards, such as they are: ilka one for himself, according to his nature. Mine, I confess, is queer. I hold an unco hand; and by the same token so do you, Eben, though maybe you're not so fond of displaying it. And the Provost, too,—the closest sitter of us all! God's sake! Human nature's queer—three or four strings at the most, and there's not a tune you cannot play on one o' them."

"Humph!" says Eben. "Your tongue was aye good company."

His foot was already in the swim of passengers on the pavement again.

"But mind you," he cried, as he was borne away with it, "I'm done with you for work."

The crowd swirled and bubbled round Rab in curiosity and amusement. From the outer rim of it old Robin Cook was crying—

"What means Eben, lad?"

Robin's blood was up, because of a dozen wrangles on his way hither. When left by James and Charlotte, he had dropped down to the High Street, triumphant, in search of his boy Rab. The High Street was a battlefield for that hero's repute. Its main intrenchment was the fact of his acquittal, but that had many weak spots for such as wished to be enemies, and these were assailing them hotly. Down the street came Robin, engaging and scattering them with parental fury. When the honest, avowed detractors were routed, his sense of Rab's innocence mounted to conviction point. There were others, slanderers in friendly masks, who chuckled at Rab's successful off-come as the crown and glory of his exploit. Clever dog (so they seemed to say): to do it and to save his skin! Robin was upon them in an instant, giving them the lie in their teeth, but they laughed at him.

"Who are you, old hot-blood?"

"The lad's father."

"He's a credit to you!"

And Robin wondered. His belief in Rab was down near to doubting.

Fresh from this warfare, Robin reached the crowd about Rab in time to hear Eben's words.

"What means Eben?" he cried.

"Just what he says," answered Rab. "He's short o' work for me."

Down the stream, in which he was bobbing, Eben cried back—

"Your laddie's lying, Robin."

"I want a word with you," says Rab to his father, walking into the causeway, where Robin joined him. "Step in with me to the National here, for peace."

The National stood hard by, and Rab led the way by the close door into the parlour. Rolland and a crony or two were just coming out.

"By Gad!" he cries, "here's the rascal himself. We were just saying——"

"This is Mr Cook, my father," says Rab, disengaging the lawyer from his friends, and leading the way into the room.

"I congratulate you, sir," says the impertinent Rolland.

"And I thank you," answered Robin with a rustic courtesy, "for your helping hand to Rab."

"Just a formality, Mr Cook, a formality. You have a son, as doubtless you're aware, that never gets into a hole that he doesn't ken a road out of."

"I've newly got an inkling of it," Robin answered, his doubting heart in his mouth.

"Mr Rolland is not the man to act in a case without the surety of his client having right on his side," suggested Rab.

"Mr Rolland's an unco of a lawyer, then," Robin answered, trying to throw the dust of his own humorsomeness in the eyes of his doubts. "But I'm glad to ken," he added, looking at the lawyer with a wistful eye—"I'm glad to ken that Mr Rolland is satisfied, as we are, o' his client's innocence."

"Of his client's evidence. Gad! it was a clever stroke of you, Rab, to bring that lass here," the lawyer chuckled.

"Begging your pardon, sir," says Robin, "that's not the way to speak of it—or I hope it is not. If it was a stroke, in your meaning, the skin it saved covers the meanest soul of all God's creatures. As an honest accident, it's still a misfortune. The parade of that lassie's sensibility, or of any lassie's, is a heavy price, if you think of it, for the declaration of the best o' men's innocence,—and that Rab, I'm feared, is not you."

"Your sentiments are nobly spoken, sir; they do credit to your own sensibility," says Rolland.

"The sensibility of the natural musician," cooed Rab.

"To be sure," Rolland caught him up. "I had forgotten—or nearly—all you have told me about your father's gift. The taste even better than the practice, I think I've heard you say?"

"Not so bad, not so bad," cried old Robin, crowing.

"Fingers not so supple as once they were, but the feeling for't as quick as ever. Do you fiddle yourself, Mr Rolland? No? I'm sorry for that, for we might have had a tear at it together at the Bowes one night. A gift! a gift! And one you can pass on," he added brightly, nodding in Rab's direction.

"Ah! Rab's talent all the country kens," says Rolland.

The sneer in the praise, like rime in the air, chilled Robin again.

"I maun be stepping," he said.

"And I go with you," said Rab. "I have a matter to speak of that will beguile the brae."

"If you should see Miss Seton," says Rolland, in giving Robin his hand, "present her with my respects."

"Deed! I'll do nothing of the kind," answers Robin; and Rab laughed in glee.

"I mean no offence to you," Robin explained, "but just that she'll not wish to be reminded of a sore subject."

"If the witness is so very touchy, better leave my gentleman, here, behind you," Rolland said, nettled, although he waved a laughing adieu.

Robin flashed a troubled eye between the two men, and "Good day to you, sir," cried to Rolland stiffly, and with a doubting heart again took the Bowes road.

Nothing was said during the climb to Cluny; but when Robin quickened his step on the flat road beyond it, Rab hummed into his ears the news

of his dismissal from Eben's shop.

"Eben, you see, is one of your small philosophers and damned clever men who condemn with a 'He hadn't been shot had he not been among the crows,' and turn their back on the unfortunate bird."

"And maybe he's right," says Robin bitterly, doubt become the conviction of doubt now.

Rab was not to be put off his tune.

"In this case, as it happens, the bird was a tailor, which means that there's eight more of him left, and Eben will find it out to his loss. Moreover, he should not have forgot that, though all nine came to grief and were fathered on his shop, he could only lose the reputation of a tailor at best."

"A tailor at best!" cried Robin, answering the only thing in Rab's speech that he understood. "A tailor at best! You forget, sir, that your father's a tailor."

"But not at best," Rab replied. "I don't forget that he's more and better,—a humane man and a generous, not to mention a fiddler."

Robin gave a doubtful snort, and walked on again.

"The Bowes is a back-going place, lad," he said, presently, turning over a plan in his head.

"Huts! father," laughed Rab. "I'm not a broken man because Eben Smith has paid me off. I've no ambition to sew Back Bowes rents all my days."

Robin stood to look at him for a moment.

"You're not the laddie you were when you went to St Brise three years ago," he said, when he fell into step again.

"And that's true," said Rab, speaking more persuasively, "and is it not only natural? Three years' acquaintance wi' the world."

"Bah!" interrupted Robin. "A man never again makes so rapid an acquaintance wi' the world as he does in the first three years of his life."

"Good! good!" cries Rab. "He finds his legs then. Later he has only to find a footing. That's what I've been doing in these three years in St Brise. I have learned a trade, and I've made friends—friends among some of the big folk in the town. Fiddle and sang and a jokey tongue, and little things o' that kind—they've taken a fancy to me. That's all. Yet, though you wouldn't believe it, and it's a story too long to tell, that's the cause of this—persecution, I might call it, that you've seen this day."

The volatile fiddler was once more scattering the jealous detractors of his boy Rab.

"Well, putting aside this ridiculous story of Black Veitch, which Eben makes an excuse for ridding him of a man worth a bigger wage, I've saved a little money,—not much, but enough, with my credit and the backing of my big friends, for a beginning. And I could aye start a pack. I doubt not that with the bit gift of tongue folk credit me with, we could keep a roof above us."

"Us!" cried Robin, turning upon Rab.

"Three years in a lifetime work wonders," says Rab.

"Back you go to St Brise, sir," cried Robin. "Now I understand it! So Rab Cuick's a married man as well as a smuggler! How daured you," cried the little man, flourishing his staff,— "how daured you allow a respectable lassie like Charlotte Seton be named with you as she was this day!"

"You haven't asked the name of the ledly," says Rab.

"Leddy!" sneered Robin. "Dochter of one o' your big friends, doubtless. I talk of an honest lass. Answer me, did Charlotte know you were married?"

"To be married."

"To be married—did Charlotte know that before you brought her forward as a witness."

"Oh! she came forward."

"Did she? Did she? And did she ken this before she came forrit?"

"I fancy she had a notion of it."

"Never! or she had never been with you in the Sil'er Wood. Man, that was a plain tale of sweethearting you unravelled to-day, and you've disgraced her. A notion of't? Did you tell her, I say?"

"Troth! That's my present errand. Father, you are overly hasty. What if it were Charlotte herself that's to . . ."

"Marry Charlotte!" cried Robin. "Charlotte and you to be married. There's a secretive young hussy for you—to tell me everything and not to tell me that. Rab, Rab, you are a lucky lad!"

Robin was leading the step abreast the Silver Wood now, his feet winged with joy. Suddenly he came to ground.

"Rab," he said, with a face gone white. "Are you worthy o' her?"

There were folks on the road advancing towards them.

"I'm going in here," said Rab; and Robin took his arm and led him into the wood.

"Rab," he cried, "before I leave you here for her to find you, you maun swear that you are innocent of this charge laid against you the day.

"Lord! How long have you walked out together?" the mercurial man went on.

"Walked out!" cried Rab, laughing. "It'll be a matter, now, of just eighteen years. You'll be inquiring next when I asked her. I never asked her. It's predestined. The little old man i' the moon has bound us with his silver thread. And now I'm going to tell her the time has come for a stronger tie, and I'm not afraid that she won't agree with me."

"You're confident," says Robin, looking at him with these sharp eyes which took their brightness from an inward glow, and not from any light they penetrated to, for they saw shallowly. "You're confident," he said.

"I ken Charlotte," says Rab, in a jubilant note,—"I ken Charlotte to the farthest ben corner of her mind."

"There's nothing in that to crow about," cried Robin in heat, and turned on his heel, and left him.

And so, with all his fears

rising, Robin came to Aunt Janet for comfort.

I do not say that all this happened exactly as it is set down here. This, remember, is only a legacy of family history, my many legacies, pieced into a story. My father and my mother told me many things; and, in my presence, they told each other many more, thinking, as indeed was the case, that as yet there was no road from my hearing to my understanding. But now their words, and many others never intended for my ears, which I caught flying in the scandalous gossip of Aunt Sarah's drawing-room, start up in my memory, and take their place in the pattern of this tale. Charlotte Seton, too, contributed to the story. I have read a whole chapter of it sometimes in a look on her face; and the younger Charlotte, mine, was deep in her mother's heart. Above all, there was this rascally Rab himself, who could see ben, as he boasted, to the farthestmost corner of folk, and oftentimes would tell what he saw there.

Rab had, as no man else whom I have ever known had it, the trick of painting people and things in such a crux and attitude that you never could see them again in any other. When the high land of houses was being built on the site of the old Custom House in St Brise, High Street, there was a scaffold accident, which Rab witnessed from his windows. Two men, or maybe it was three, were killed outright, and some had narrow escapes, George

Baldy, the hunchback, among them.

"When the stour lifted," said Rab, describing the affair, "I saw Hunchie Baldy hanging from the cross-beam, for all the world like a stable lantern." Many a time since then I have had dealings with this man Baldy, set firm on his feet on the solid earth, and yet for me he hangs eternally, stable-lantern-wise, from that cross-beam.

That is an example of Rab's talent in painting vividly the appearances of men and of things, and he exercised it equally in getting at the moral nature of folks, and holding it up for a spectacle. I tell you the dead and gone persons of my story—some of them his kith and kin, his own wife Charlotte is among them—have had their hearts plucked out of them and exposed to view by Rab as callously as if they had been the hearts of traitors and Rab the common hangman.

So, although I cannot remember old Robin Cook in the flesh, I have derived from his graceless son a picture, the completest, of that little bow-legged tailor, so hot and honest. I can picture him trotting up the brae when he left Rab in the wood that afternoon, all in a flutter between anger and affection; yet when he came to the Bowes, though he was seeking support and solace from Aunt Janet, still the jokey man would come uppermost, and he had to greet her with a jaunty word.

It was a jaunty word, of course, about Rab's acquittal.

James had told her, Janet answered. She was glad for Robin's sake, she said—for all their sakes. Were not they all involved?

"Ay! ay! James told you," said Robin, his assurance wavering before Janet's bitterness. "And what, now, did James think of it?"

She told him what James had recounted: just that Charlotte made a good appearance, and that Rab got clean off.

"She got him off," whispered Rab, doubt clouding his briskness, and enveloping it.

Janet knew that. James had not said so, but she had guessed it.

"And Charlotte? And Charlotte?" he repeated, when there was no answer to his question.

"What have you done with the girl down in St Brise?" she broke out with temper. "She's come back another woman."

"James had been too hard on her, maybe," suggested Robin.

"Not James, but the thing itself, was too hard on her," Janet answered more hotly.

"A proud lass! A proud lass!"

"She's been publicly held up."

"Tuts! I came to you for heartening, Janet Seton," cried Robin, in vexation.

"You don't believe he was in this smuggling affair?" she went on, not heeding him.

"No, no. Certainly not, else how should the bailies let him off. And yet I won't say he was not capable of it, such is his love of a ploy and bothering folks."

"You have your doubts, Robin Cook," she turned on him fiercely—"you and all of you. None but had doubts, James told me."

"Yes, yes. Till Charlotte stepped into the box. She made his innocence patent."

"Are you so sure she's clear on that point," insisted Janet.

"What!" cried the little man aghast. "Janet, I'd have given my fiddle to save her this."

"Oh! I ken you are fond of the girl. Are we not all fond o' her—fond o' her? What about it? Affection's but a nest from which the fledglings fly. Which should go quicker than the cuckoo-bird dropped into it. You mind that Sabbath night, Robin, eighteen—nigh nineteen years ago?"

"Fine."

"The night that brought me a treasure. And since then—I'll tell you. Since then I've been living in a sinful hope—that's the truth. I thought to myself, I said to myself, and I thought that I thought it: 'It's the Lord's will that she comes to me.' It's not that I have not wondered often, and looked at her and made guesses. . . . 'But it's the Lord's will,' I ever said to myself, 'and it's the Lord's will that she came unbeknown and unchristened.' All the time, it is to keep her to myself that I have been silent. To keep her, to have her for my very own—there's an avarice for affection as well as for siller—that's what has been in my heart. Sometimes I have seen the doubt in her eye, and deceived myself into

thinking it was not there; and as she never worded her questionings, I have shut my eyes to them, persuading myself that to her I would never be other than her own mother, and she own daughter to me. But it has come at last to-day. Rab, or Rab's misdoing or misfortune, has put it into her head to ask it."

"Rab!" cried his father.

"Oh! I do not know that Rab knows much, or anything. If he knew it, he would not say it in so many words. That's not Rab's way. It's enough for him to get a hint, and having a hint, to weave a story, and to weave it so fine and gossamer that when you catch it, it breaks and vanishes in your hand."

"The rascal!" cries Robin.

"Not that," says Janet, going white. "Just a strange laddie—no more—as we love Charlotte. A strange lad and a strange lass."

"Ah!" cried Robin. "Trust a woman's eyes. I see you guessed they had an understanding between them. Lad and lass—so the world goes round. Why should we begrudge them leaving the nest? The past is by with it. The world's before them. Rab has got his foot in to it, I verily believe, and they'll be happy, woman."

"Say you so too?" said Janet. "Listen. Here's something no one in the Bowes save myself knew of till this day. Three years after Charlotte's coming I got a letter. It might have shown me my own heart. It is lying in the patch-box

upstairs, and I know every word of it. It was from her mother, or it purported to be: I doubt not it was from her, the poor woman. She said she had heard I was acting a mother to her child. 'I leave her in your hands,' she wrote. 'The God who clouds the sky makes the sun to shine. He is not so cruel as men and women. He made the past, and He opens out a future. Were she, my child, to come into my life now, it would bring back the past, to her and to me, and spoil her future and mine. Give her this message, from her mother, if ever she inquires after me. It will be no grief to her to know that she will never know me. Love feeds on the living, not on the dead. Tell her, then, from me, if ever she can understand it: God is good. He will blot out the past and open a new future to broken hearts.' That was all the letter, Robin—a voice out of the dark."

"Had you no guess at the writer?"

"Supposing I had, I did not wish to know. Like the woman who wrote it, I was reading God's will into my own inclinations. There was her message, and I delivered it to Charlotte to-day."

"And how does she take it?" asked Robin, all inquisitive.

"It hasn't time to reach her heart yet. She's away out with it in her head."

"Where?"

"The Sil'er Wood."

"I left Rab there."

"Ah!" cried Janet.

I gather that it was then that

Charlotte came in. It was dark, I suppose, for she did not seem to notice Robin's presence, but stole up behind Aunt Janet, and put her hands round her eyes.

"Guess!" she cried.

"Charlotte Seton," said Janet.

"More!" cried Charlotte, and bending to Janet's ear, she whispered into it.

The little tailor slipped up from his corner behind Charlotte, and in turn clapped his hands over her eyes, and—

"Guess!" he cried also.

"Robin," Charlotte replied, and faltered.

"More!" cried the merry man.

"Let me go, and I'll tell you," says Charlotte.

He released his hands, and she kissed Aunt Janet before she turned to him. Then she bent to the proud little tailor, and kissed him.

"I can call you father," she said, and kissed him again, and Robin crowed "I know."

"Ha!" he cried in his glee. "Your pride will be hurt no more—as Janet here was persuading me—at being publicly named with Rab."

"Rab says we had forgot to tell ourselves what everybody knew," answered Charlotte with a smile.

"It was my fault, at any rate," she went on uneasily, "and Rab has lost his job in Eben's shop because of me. But he'll start afresh; with me to help him he'll start afresh. Mother, what that message says . . ."

She stopped short; but Janet said, "Robin knows."

"And I have told Rab," Charlotte continued, "and Rab says . . ."

She faltered again, and did not tell what Rab had said. But I know what he said. Charlotte told him the story of the letter which Janet had told her. "It's a voice out of the dark," she had said, quoting Janet. "It's a voice out of a passing blink of light," Rab had answered. She did not understand him, or not then; but he was right. Where did he learn that strange command of the heart of men and women? But Charlotte said nothing of this now.

"That message is for us. It is true. There's a future lying before us."

"It's not true, not true!" cried Janet in a sudden great temper. "It's not true in that way. Would you then leave us? Is it so lightly done to root out all your affections and transplant them into a new plot of life, and forget the auld?" And then, as suddenly calm, "Forgive me," she said; "we are all of us selfish."

"Nay, mother," said Charlotte. "Mother. I maun leave you and Uncle and Mr Cook that I may be with Rab and help him in St Brise. But I'll never leave you for long, and I'll never forget."

Janet took her in her arms.

"May you never have a past

that you would fain forget," she said.

A flood of revelation rose to Charlotte's cheeks. Her eyes flooded with sudden tears.

"Oh! mother, mother," she cried, and Janet released her from her arms. With a grip of the heart, she realised that she held her no longer as before.

"Oh! mother," cried the girl, "you maun have been unhappy! and I, so happy!"

Robin went home that night through the paddock, slashing the hedges with his stick, once more routing, if he could, the crowd of Rab's detractors on the St Brise street. At his own garden end Rab emerged from the darkening to meet him, and before Robin could say a word in congratulation—

"So, so, father, what's all the excitement?" Rab cries.

"Will I tell you, Rab!" says the tailor, plumped suddenly into doubt by a note in Rab's voice. "Will I tell you! Your mother, the woman that bore you, and none should know you better,—your mother used to say to me, 'Robin, we've gotten a laddie, I doubt, that will either mak' a spoon or spoil a horn.' And, by God, sir, I'm trying to persuade myself that you have not already spoiled the horn."

(To be continued.)

ACROSS THE HIMALAYAS IN MID-WINTER.

BY THE EARL OF RONALDSHAY.

EVERY one has his own ideas as to the relative merits of different forms of sport, and I have heard the partisans of fox-hunting and pig-sticking, big-game shooting and fishing, holding heated arguments, each engaged in the obviously hopeless task of trying to convince the other of the superiority of his own particular and favourite sport. As far as my own experience goes, I have never come across any form of sport that has quite the same fascination as the pursuit of mountain big game, and it was due to my fondness for sport of this particular kind, in conjunction with certain private reasons which rendered it expedient that I should return to civilisation at an early date, that I found myself embarked on a journey which I would not willingly undergo a second time, however strong might be the inducement.

I had for some time been wandering among the peaks and precipices of the great lonely mountains, in various parts of the Himalayas, and had at length reached a far-off corner of the empire, where the earth lifts up her hoary head, as it were, to the very heavens, and where, amid scenery of the wildest desolation, stand some of the loftiest mountain-peaks in the world. Here, amid crags and precipices of the most appalling description, lives and

dies the majestic spiral-horned markhor (*Capra Falconeri*), in the pursuit of which animal I experienced some of the most exciting and arduous stalking it has ever been my lot to enjoy. Thus it came about that after some weeks' most successful hunting, during which I had secured half-a-dozen fine pairs of the much-coveted horns, I found myself cut off from the outer world by huge barriers of mountains, whose snow-bound passes loomed in grim defiance between me and civilisation, making my journey the anxious and dangerous one it was.

There was a good deal to occupy my attention before starting, which caused me to decide to halt at the village of Boonji, on the Indus, for a couple of days, where I might make all the arrangements possible for the journey. There were, in addition to a bungalow occupied by two officers attached to the Gilgit agency, by whom I was most hospitably entertained, a post and telegraph office, and a *tesildah* or native official, who I knew would be most useful in assisting me to collect coolies for transport. The whole of one morning was devoted to overhauling the baggage and dispensing with as much of it as was possible, for I foresaw that one of my chief difficulties would be likely to arise in connection with transport

arrangements. Winter had set in in earnest, with its usual complement of driving snow-storms, biting frosts, and crushing avalanches; and vague rumours of the hardships suffered by those who ventured across the lonely passes of the mountains, of frost-bite, and even of the death from exhaustion and exposure of certain natives who had recently essayed a journey across the mountains, were afloat and obtrusively prominent whenever I broached the subject of transport among the natives. Such rumours were doubtless exaggerated with a view to increasing the rate of hire; but that they were to a certain extent well grounded was obvious when a sorry-looking individual approached me to beg for alms, and showed me in the place of hands a wretched withered stump, the result, he assured me, of frost-bite.

Luckily there was no necessity to take tents, there being huts at intervals the whole way; and having discarded all impediments of the kind that I had with me, in addition to all superfluous ammunition and stores, I collected what remained and arranged it into very light loads, to find that I should require at the least eighteen coolies. This may seem a large number to take all that one requires when travelling light; but it must be remembered that though fifty or sixty pounds is an average load for a coolie under ordinary conditions, he can hardly be expected to carry more than thirty or forty

when wading through deep dry snow, if you hope to see him at the end of the day's march: and besides food for the whole party, the horns required three men, the rifles and guns two more, leaving only thirteen for everything else, including stores, bedding, and the small amount of camp furniture I allowed myself.

When everything was ready, plenty of coolies were found willing to go from Boonji, especially when they realised that they were only expected to accompany me as far as Astor, a village a few marches distant, where I was to obtain fresh transport. Among them were three Kashmiris, who had brought grass rope for making the sandal usually worn by the sportsman in the Himalayas, from the fertile valley of Kashmir, earlier in the season, and were only too glad of the opportunity thus afforded of returning to their homes, by volunteering to accompany me and carry loads the whole way. This was satisfactory, and on the 12th of January 1900 I started them off in charge of my head servant, Ram Pershad,—a strong, thick-set, bow-legged Hindu from Meerut, who had been with me throughout my wanderings, and of whose excellence as a camp servant I cannot speak too highly,—while I remained to spend a last evening with my friends of the Boonji bungalow, and to enjoy once more, before leaving them behind, the many little trifles which go to make life comfortable—well-cooked food, pleasant company, an easy-chair,

dry clothes, a warm room, and a score of others, insignificant in themselves, perhaps, and accepted as a matter of course in the ordinary routine of everyday life, but of sufficient importance to make their absence felt and their presence appreciated by any one who may chance to have been in the often unpleasant position of having to do without them.

It was, consequently, the 13th of January 1900 when I left the barren sandy valley of the Indus and began the ascent of the mountain-chain before me. In front Nanga Parbat (26,620 feet) frowned down like a giant sentinel on the surrounding country; behind, as far as the eye could see, rose tier upon tier of stupendous mountain-peaks, standing out on the eaves of the "roof of the world," great Haramosh (24,270 feet), Deobunni (20,154 feet), and Rakapooshi (25,550 feet).

My way lay up the valley of the Astor river; but for several miles after leaving the junction of the Astor and the Indus the winding mountain-path zig-zagged backwards and forwards up the precipitous sides of the Hattoo Pir, till the river appeared but a tiny thread of silver below me.

I was able to ride this first day's journey, along the narrow mountain-path overhanging sheer precipices of many hundred feet, and by evening reached the small village of Dashkin, a distance of about thirty miles, and caught up the coolies with my baggage, whom I had started off the day before. Henceforth it

would be a case of walking, or rather of wading, through interminable stretches of deep powdery snow, in which no sign of road or pathway would be visible beyond the tracks of the hardy post-runners, who for political reasons are employed in keeping up communication as regularly as possible with our distant frontier outposts.

The morning of the 14th broke cold and stormy, and I had not gone far before it came on to snow, great masses of cloud rolling down the mountains and obscuring everything from view with a grey pall of damp chilling fog. The village of Astor—the largest village in these parts—was only fourteen miles distant, and I had no difficulty in reaching it soon after midday, the coolies turning up by evening. All that night and most of the next day snow fell with persistent monotony, and I was obliged to remain where I was, with no better occupation to distract my thoughts from pondering on the probable state of the passes ahead than watching the great fleecy snowflakes fall softly but with steady persistence to earth.

Still, I was better off than I might have been, for the hut here had been for some time in occupation by the European engineer in charge of the road to Gilgit, whose duties necessitated his living in the district; and though he himself was away at the time, I found the pleasing difference that exists between a furnished

abode that has recently been lived in and an unfurnished one that has not, and made the most of such comfort as was to be derived from my surroundings.

I had made myself quite at home, and was sitting comfortably in a capacious arm-chair in front of a cheerful blaze, when I was startled out of a reverie by a fearful bang at the door, which promptly opened inwards to admit a most unlooked-for form of disturbance in the shape of two wild-looking wolves, who tore round the room, much to my perturbation, in an apparent state of frenzy, leaping on to the bed and knocking over the furniture, till reduced to a more tranquil state by the appearance in the doorway of an individual who performed the offices of cook, and was left in charge when his master was away. He apologised for having neglected to tie up his charges, and expressed a hope that I had been in no way inconvenienced by their somewhat unceremonious entry, assuring me at the same time that they were perfectly quiet and gentlemanly behaved creatures. The description struck me as being just a little tame, especially when a short time afterwards I observed the rabid and unfeeling way in which they tore up and devoured certain portions of raw meat which constituted their daily feed, and wondered if the day might not chance to come when they might so far forget themselves as to tear up in like manner things other

than they were meant to. Truly solitude induces one to make strange companions, but I felt that I would put up with a long spell of solitude before I took to wolves as household pets. Dogs are excellent company; cats, and even bears, one might become much attached to, but wolves! Well, there is no accounting for tastes.

The 16th showed an improvement, and in the morning the headman of the district, who had been warned of my probable arrival from Boonji, came round and informed me that he had collected coolies who would accompany me as far as Goorais, the next village of any appreciable size, and assured me that he had picked his men and chosen as strong and hardy a lot as was available. This I had made a great point of, as carrying loads over snow, especially at great altitudes, is very far from child's play; and though life in this part of the world may be cheap (as one might be led to suppose from the tale of the old woman's fond relations, who after due deliberation approached the unfortunate sportsman who had killed her and gravely informed him that they were decided that her value was four annas!—so at least runs the story), yet I had no wish to have any one's death on my hands, if by any reasonable precaution I could possibly avoid it.

When I had seen the men and started them loading up, I dismissed the coolies from Boonji—Baltis for the most part from the borders of Bal-

tistan—and prepared to start on the next march. I left the matter of pay to be decided by the *tesildah* of Astor, who proposed to the men before they started that they should receive six annas—equivalent to sixpence—per man for the first march, which was by way of being an easy one, and double that sum for the succeeding marches, an arrangement which they willingly agreed to. The ordinary pay for an average day's march in most parts of the Himalayas is four annas (fourpence) per coolie; but in the Gilgit agency, which is barren and destitute to a degree, food is a serious consideration, and six annas a-day is the recognised tariff, two annas of which is deducted if the hirer supplies his men with food. This he is practically bound to do, as when away from his home in these barren districts there is no place where the native can obtain it for himself, and an order has to be procured from the political agent at Gilgit for permission to buy flour from the various Government storehouses which are kept at intervals along the road through the agency, and which are supplied by a continual transport service through the short summer when the passes are open, from the abundant crops of the Kashmir valley. The necessity of preventing the stores from being depleted is obvious, and is one of the chief reasons why the country is closed to travellers and sportsmen, who are bound to have with them a considerable following of servants and coolies,

all of whom require to be fed.

At the end of the day's march we halted at a hut known as Godhai, about sixteen miles distant, and here spent the night. The height of Astor, which I had left in the morning, is about 7800 feet, or a rise of, roughly speaking, 4000 feet from the Indus, where I had left it, and in front loomed the dreaded Boorzil Pass, with an ascent of close on another 6000 feet. From autumn well on into June this pass is closed by snow, and the storms that sweep down on it during the winter carry all before them with an overwhelming fury.

The next morning, as no snow was actually falling, we continued our march; but the mountains all round were lost in mist, and the appearance of the sky was far from promising. As we went on along a gradual ascent the snow underfoot became deeper, till by the time we reached Chillum Chauki, a hut near the foot of the Boorzil Pass, and our shelter for the night, it lay with an average depth of several feet. The distance of the march was supposed to be about sixteen miles, and I reached the hut at three o'clock; but hour after hour went by with no sign of any coolies with the baggage. At 7.30 Ram Pershad turned up, saying that the coolies made very slow progress through the snow, and were still a long way off, which was anything but comforting, as it was intensely cold and we had no food. About 10.30 a coolie, who had come on ahead of the rest,

arrived with a portion of a sheep and some eggs, and Ram Pershad having managed, as only a child of the desert knows how, to cook them without apparatus of any kind, I dined! Soon after one or two more coolies struggled in, and at 11.15 a man with my bedding. I was not very long in getting into it, and immediately fell asleep. The rest of the coolies arrived about midnight. The cold during the night was severe, and all the more felt owing to its being very damp and raw, the thermometer registering 26° of frost in an atmosphere that was heavy with cloud and fog.

At seven o'clock on the morning of the 18th I saw my coolies off, after dividing up the baggage so as to give every man a very light load, and then set off myself. As the sun rose in the heavens the clouds and fog dispersed, and before long we found ourselves tramping along over a huge stretch of dazzling whiteness, with lofty snow-bound peaks on either side of us, under an absolutely cloudless sky. By ten o'clock we reached the post-runner's hut of Sirdar Khoti, at the foot of the pass, and rested a few minutes before starting on the final ascent. As we left this small sign of human habitation behind us, and became lost in vast wastes of the wildest desolation, the dead silence, broken only by the laboured breathing of myself and my followers as we slowly forced our way through the deep dry snow, combined with the utter

absence of life, filled one with a feeling akin to awe, and forced upon one the smallness and impotence of man amid the stupendous monuments of nature.

In spite of the sun the cold was intense, and every short halt proved how necessary were all the precautions we had taken against frost-bite. Between one and two o'clock we reached the summit of the pass, and were all glad enough for a short rest in the uninhabited hut which stands upon the top. We could not afford to waste much time, however, for five miles still lay between us and the nearest post-runner's hut, and after a short breathing-space we began the descent, another two and a half hours' scrambling, falling, and sliding bringing us to the post-runner's hut, Boorzil Chauki.

The relief on getting into the shade of a room after the fierce glare of the sun on the snow all day was immense; but the cold was very trying, and in spite of a huge wood-fire my thermometer rapidly sank to 8° Fahr. on the window-sill, the temperature in the room itself being only a few degrees higher. As the sun sank behind the mountains, and the stars began to twinkle and shine with extraordinary brilliance, the scene was one which could not fail to impress the most prosaic of mortals. In the dry rarefied air everything stood out with wonderful sharpness of outline, and as the great orb of the full moon rose clear and

chill-looking, she seemed to look down in approval upon the cold frost-bound earth beneath her. The thermometer dropped rapidly to zero, but never registered more than 32° during the night, though the cold was probably much greater beyond the radius of the huge fire which I kept up, and in the morning when I started again at nine o'clock it was still freezing 28°. I experienced many trivial annoyances, both on this and other occasions during the march, owing to the low temperature in the interior of the huts; for everything capable of freezing did so, and obstinately refused to be thawed. For several days I was unable to write in anything but pencil, for my ink, though the bottle was quite full, was reduced to a state of solidity, in which state it remained till I reached a warmer clime. It was also annoying to find, on taking up the milk-jug at breakfast, that it was covered with ice, which had to be melted whenever one wished to pour out some milk, for it had only to stand on the table for a few seconds to be reduced to the state of a solid again.

We were blessed with another fine day, and the march of fourteen miles to the next hut passed off uneventfully except for a fright we got shortly before the end of the day's march. We were walking across a steep snow-slide, cutting steps as we went, when there was a sudden sharp sound, resembling the noise made by ice cracking, only very much louder, and my Kashmiris with one accord took

to their legs and fled. It was nothing much after all, but served to show how easily an avalanche may be started. For some reason or other the top layer of snow on the steep snow-slide in front of us had given way, and a few cartloads had crashed down, leaving a ploughed-up patch in the otherwise unbroken surface. All the coolies got in in good time, and I began to congratulate myself on the successful way in which I was getting over my arduous journey; but the smooth course of events was destined to come to an abrupt termination, and before many hours were over the difficulties and hardships of the undertaking were brought home to me in a very realistic manner.

With a suddenness characteristic of the elements in these parts, the whole aspect of the heavens changed in an incredibly short time; and during the night the wind, which for the last two days had been conspicuous by its absence, blew a perfect hurricane. With the advent of dawn it died away, but had done its work; for, in place of the clear blue sky, dense masses of ugly cloud rolled ominously over all the surrounding scene, and by the time we started at 9 A.M. snow was falling steadily, and so thickly that it was impossible to see more than a few yards in any direction. Under the circumstances, I strongly urged the advisability of staying where we were; but my guide maintained that we could reach the next hut, a distance of twelve miles, and concluding that he must

know best, I gave way. Accompanied by him and another Kashmiri, I led the way, followed by the coolies with the baggage. The snow, which was every minute becoming deeper, was dry and powdery, and the going consequently most arduous. It is no doubt a very sound rule never to part from one's baggage, and before very long I had reason and leisure to ponder on the excellence of such a practice; but the coolies made wretchedly slow progress, and in a rash moment, and under pressure of the strong temptation to reach shelter and get out of the swirling, blinding snow as soon as possible, I left them with an escort of a couple of local men to bring them along, and pressed on with the two Kashmiris.

On we went, silent and labouring, all our energy concentrated in getting one foot in front of the other, while the snow fell softly and caressingly to earth, shrouding everything in a thick white pall, till, for all I knew, we might have been going forwards, or backwards, or even round in a circle. For four long hours we forced our way onward without a halt, except for an occasional stop to get our breath, till at last I insisted on a short rest to refresh ourselves with the cold food we had with us. Half an hour I allowed for this, and then on again. Slowly we forced our way through the deep treacherous snow, coming every now and then across avalanches newly fallen, which caused us to redouble our vigilance on dangerous places.

At last, just as dark was falling, we staggered into the bare hut that was to afford us shelter for the night. Luckily we found a supply of firewood, and after some trouble, owing to the dampness of the wood and the want of draught up the chimney, I induced a fire to burn. This, however, proved to be a new source of discomfort, as the chimney absolutely refused to admit of any smoke going up it, and in a very short time the room was filled with the choking pungent smoke peculiar to damp wood-fires. After this the only conditions on which I was able to have a fire were the window and door wide open, and even then it was hardly bearable. Outside a gale had sprung up, and with the snow, which never ceased falling, created a veritable blizzard. About two feet of fresh snow had fallen since the morning, and the night promised to double it.

Having ransacked the hut, I found the furniture to consist of a couple of wooden chairs, a wooden table, and an old kerosene-oil tin. I luckily had some tea in my pocket, which I speedily turned to account by boiling it in the oil-tin (!), after having first reduced some snow to water, and, in spite of the flavour of smoke and oil, found it most comforting.

Night settled down with a darkness that could almost be felt, and as the hours passed by, and none of the coolies or servants turned up, a terrible and sickening fear laid hold of me and refused to be shaken off; for well I knew the

danger of the silent merciless avalanche. Only a few days before a European telegraph-signaller, accompanied by a party of seven or eight natives, who had been up to repair the telegraph line, which was suffering from one of the chronic winter interruptions to which it is liable, had been swept away without a warning, on a portion of the very ground which I had so lately traversed. An exclamation, a sudden cry, a blinding flash of dazzling whiteness, as the mountain-side gave way, sweeping down upon its victims, swift, silent, inexorable, and all was over. A single individual a little apart from the rest, after being buried to the head on the extreme edge of the avalanche, was spared to tell the harrowing tale. The fear of death is born in us, and he who can honestly say that he fears not death is more than human; yet to look death in the face, when circumstances force it before our vision, is to be moved by something besides our natural feelings of terror. In the realisation of the nearness of the angel of death, the distorted picture of life we are so accustomed to see by the light of our daily lives is suddenly straightened; the greater issues at stake assume their true proportion, and the trivialities to which we are wont to attach so much importance as too often to fill up the whole of the picture, for once fall back into proper focus, and we see things as they are. I well remember, and hope I shall never forget, the feelings with which I was filled as I

stood on the ploughed-up mass of snow from which had but lately been dug the bodies of the victims of the avalanche, and in that moment knew that it was in greater hands than man's that the threads of our lives were held, and that, were our fate to be the same which had so lately overtaken others on this very spot, or were we to be guided safely to the end of our journey, an omniscient Providence ordereth all things for the best.

Yet as darkness, which seemed tangible, came down upon the earth and cut me off from my men still battling with the elements, and still, for aught I knew, far from shelter, fear for them, far greater than any I had ever felt for myself, took hold of me, and, fight against it as I would, overwhelmed me with an anxiety that made the night the most terrible I have ever spent. By 10 P.M. I gave up all hope of seeing them, at any rate before morning, and took counsel with myself as to the best way of whiling away the weary hours till daylight. There was little enough choice when I came to consider it. Here I was in a cheerless hut, with no food or blankets, damp steamy clothes, and in darkness except for the fitful flame of the smoky fire. I lay down on the hard wooden floor in front of the fire, and, in spite of physical discomfort and anxiety, worn out as I was by the toil of the day, dropped off every now and then into a troubled sleep.

Slowly the long winter night wore on, and when daylight at length began to make the dark-

ness visible, it was only to show that snow was falling with the same persistent monotony. I was stiff and cramped after the long night in wet clothes on the hard wooden floor, my eyes aching and bloodshot, and my voice hoarse from the stifling pungent smoke; and with a hungry wolfish look, if my expression in any way corresponded to my feelings. I told one of the Kashmiris he must get to a village a short distance off and procure food at all costs, and also try and collect men to form a search-party, though I doubted his being able to do this while the storm raged. He went off, and I did not see him again for many hours; but imagine my joy when, a couple of hours later, I made out a small black speck on the general monochrome of white, which slowly, very slowly, got nearer and more distinct, resolving itself finally into a straggling line of woe-begone battered-looking men—a portion of my coolies. When they reached me, and I had had some food, which I was much in need of, I heard their tale. They had struggled on well into the night, when, utterly exhausted and worn out, they had reached a small village, where they had got shelter. Three of them had been caught by a small avalanche, but had mercifully been extricated by the rest before it was too late. Six of them were still out, and these latter did not turn up for four days.

A little farther back on the track over which we had just come—though this I did not

learn till later, when the terrors of the mountains were behind me—a post-runner met his fate, lost in the heart of the great lonely mountains, a single unit in the great sea of humanity, who would, when the mail did not turn up, form the subject of an official document, in which he would be described as “Missing.”

For three more days and nights the storm raged with unabated violence, while I was a prisoner in the wretched cheerless hut, unable to have even a fire, except for a few minutes at a time, when my feet and hands became so numb with cold as to be unbearable.

At last, on the 24th, the mist rolled up like a curtain, revealing once more the surrounding objects; the storm-clouds parted, and the sun peeped through, cheering us once more with the warmth of his rays. I took the precaution of remaining where I was for the day, as my guide warned me that the first day of bright sun after a storm was the most dangerous, as then the newly fallen snow came down in great avalanches from the precipitous cliffs, and woe betide the man who is caught by one of these.

On the 25th I started before daylight, in the hope of getting to the end of the day's march early, in case the sun should come out hot during the day, and cause the snow to come down the precipitous sides of the valley through which my route lay. The going was fearful, for we sank deep at every step, and as the day dawned, the sky, which had been clear,

became overcast, and at mid-day snow began to fall. After going about ten miles, our way led us uphill again, towards the foot of the pass known as the Raj Diangan, and I have seldom experienced more unpleasant ground to get over than I did for the next few miles. It seemed we were walking over a water-channel filled with great boulders, though, owing to the depth of the snow, we appeared to be walking on level ground, till, with a sudden shock, one found oneself in a hole between the rocks, concealed by the treacherous snow. This continued for several miles, and by the time I reached the hut Gurai, a distance of fifteen miles in all, which had taken us from before daylight to late in the afternoon, I was absolutely exhausted. A few days before, during the recent storm, an avalanche had come down close to the hut, burying a small stream, the water-supply of the place, and I found a well many feet deep in the snow just completed by the post-runners.

As darkness came down with no diminution of the snow-storm, and no coolies turned up, I looked forward to another night such as I had spent on the 20th, and had settled down on the floor and was half-asleep, when I was roused by shouts outside, and in a few minutes a coolie burst into the hut. He told me that the rest had been unable to reach me, but were safe in a small village a couple of miles off. He himself and one other had strug-

gled on with food and blankets, but his companion had given up, and he had lost him in the dark. This news was so far satisfactory in that I knew that the coolies, all excepting one, were safe; and, fortified with the cold food and blankets which the man had brought, I managed to pass a better night than might have been expected.

With day snow ceased falling, and as I was gazing anxiously over the huge undulating snow-fields, a sorry spectacle met my eye. Slowly and with halting step a gaunt figure, with a pinched and starved appearance, approached us. On his reaching us I noticed something which made me put out my hand and feel him. His clothes were hard and stiff as boards. The men stood staring and uttering exclamations in an idiotic imbecile sort of way, till I made them understand that the man was at once to be thawed, when they set to work with a will, pommelling and rubbing him till the wretched individual cried out in pain. It was the coolie who had started with the man who had brought me food and bedding the night before. How he had lived through the night I cannot imagine, for sure enough he had spent it in the snow, and his escape to tell the tale seemed almost a miracle.

Shortly afterwards the remainder of the coolies arrived, and after a few minutes for them to rest, we started on the ascent of the Raj Diangan. I took the precaution, after

recent experiences, of bringing a couple of strong men along with me, carrying food and blankets; for I feared that the coolies, who seemed exhausted, might not reach the hut at Tragbal by night. The day was fine, and, in spite of the severe labour of scaling the pass through the deep snow, the spirits of all were higher than they had been for many days, for we were within view of the end of our hardships, and the danger to which we had been daily exposed, of being swept away silently and without warning by the deadly avalanche, would be over on our arrival at the summit of the pass. Hour after hour I forced myself to go on, till I felt as if I must sink down and rest in the soft enticing snow; but the danger was too great, and I at length reached the log-hut over the summit of the pass just as night was falling. Most of the coolies got in at different hours of the night; but a few re-

mained in a post-runner's shanty a few miles back till the next day.

As I left Tragbal on the 27th, and saw the huge expanse of the Vale of Kashmir spread out like a map beneath me, and knew that I had at length reached the edge of the great mountain-chain across which I had been marching, I was filled with a feeling of profound relief and thankfulness.

A few miles straight down the mountain-side, through deep snow and over slippery patches of ice, and I found myself on the banks of the Woolar Lake, where a Kashmiri boat, known as a *doonga*, was awaiting me; and a few hours later, my servants and baggage having been got on board, we started for Srinagar. Two and a half days' paddling through the Woolar Lake and up the river Jhelum brought us to the capital and civilisation, and my journey across the Himalayas was at an end.

FOUNTAINBLUE.

BY JOHN BUCHAN.

I.

ONCE upon a time, as the story-books say, a boy came over a ridge of hill, from which a shallow vale ran out into the sunset. It was a high, wind-blown country, where the pines had a crook in their backs and the rocks were scarred and bitten with winter storms. But below was the beginning of pastoral. Soft birch-woods, shady beeches, meadows where cattle had browsed for generations, fringed the little brown river as it twined to the sea. Farther, and the waves broke on white sands, the wonderful billows of the West which cannot bear to be silent. And between, in a garden wilderness, with the evening flaming in its windows, stood Fountainblue, my little four-square castle which guards the valley and the beaches.

The boy had torn his clothes, scratched his face, cut one finger deeply, and soaked himself with bog-water, but he whistled cheerfully and his eyes were happy. He had had an afternoon of adventure, startling emprises achieved in solitude; assuredly a day to remember and mark with a white stone. And the beginning had been most unpromising. After lunch he had been attired in his best raiment, and, in the misery of a broad white collar, despatched with his cousins to take tea

with the small lady who domineered in Fountainblue. The prospect had pleased him greatly, the gardens fed his fancy, the hostess was an old confederate, and there were sure to be excellent things to eat. But his curious temper had arisen to torment him. On the way he quarrelled with his party, and in a moment found himself out of sympathy with the future. The enjoyment crept out of the prospect. He knew that he did not shine in society, he foresaw an afternoon when he would be left out in the cold and his hilarious cousins treated as the favoured guests. He reflected that tea was a short meal at the best, and that games on a lawn were a poor form of sport. Above all, he felt the torture of his collar and the straitness of his clothes. He pictured the dreary return in the twilight, when the afternoon, which had proved, after all, such a dismal failure, had come to a weary end. So, being a person of impulses, he mutinied at the gates of Fountainblue and made for the hills. He knew he should get into trouble, but trouble, he had long ago found out, was his destiny, and he scorned to avoid it. And now, having cast off the fear of God and man, he would for some short hours do exactly as he pleased.

Half-crying with regret for the delights he had forsworn, he ran over the moor to the craggy hills which had always been forbidden him. When he had climbed among the rocks awe fell upon the desolate little adventurer, and he bewailed his choice. But soon he found a blue hawk's nest, and the possession of a coveted egg inspired him to advance. By-and-by he had climbed so high that he could not return, but must needs scale Stob Ghabhar itself. With a quaking heart he achieved it, and then, in the pride of his heroism, he must venture down the Grey Correi where the wild goats lived. He saw a bearded ruffian, and pursued him with stones, stalking him cunningly till he was out of breath. Then he found odd little spleenwort ferns, which he pocketed, and high up in the rocks a friendly raven croaked his encouragement. And then, when the shadows lengthened, he set off cheerily homewards, hungry, triumphant, and very weary.

All the way home he flattered his soul. In one afternoon he had been hunter and trapper, and what to him were girls' games and pleasant things to eat? He pictured himself the hardy outlaw, feeding on oatmeal and goat's-flesh, the terror and pride of his neighbourhood. Could the little mis-

tress of Fountainblue but see him now, how she would despise his prosaic cousins! And then, as he descended on the highway, he fell in with his forsaken party.

For a wonder they were in good spirits—so good that they forgot to remind him, in their usual way, of the domestic terrors awaiting him. A man had been there who had told them stories and shown them tricks, and there had been cocoa-nut cake, and Sylvia had a new pony on which they had ridden races. The children were breathless with excitement, very much in love with each other as common sharers in past joys. And as they talked all the colour went out of his afternoon. The blue hawk's egg was cracked, and it looked a stupid, dingy object as it lay in his cap. His rare ferns were crumpled and withered, and who was to believe his stories of Stob Ghabhar and the Grey Correi? He had been a fool to barter ponies and tea and a man who knew tricks for the barren glories of following his own fancy. But at anyrate he would show no sign. If he was to be an outlaw, he would carry his outlawry well; so with a catch in his voice and tears in his eyes he jeered at his inattentive companions, upbraiding himself all the while for his folly.

II.

The sun was dipping behind Stob Ghabhar when Maitland drove over the ridge of hill, whence the moor-road dips to

Fountainblue. Twenty long miles from the last outpost of railway to the western sea-loch, and twenty of the barest, steep-

est miles in the bleak north. And all the way he had been puzzling himself with the half-painful, half-pleasing memories of a childhood which to the lonely man still overtopped the present. Every wayside bush was the home of recollection. In every burn he had paddled and fished; here he had found the jack-snipe's nest, there he had hidden when the shepherds sought him for burning the heather in May. He lost for a little the burden of his years and cares, and lived again in that old fresh world which had no boundaries, where sleep and food were all his thought at night, and adventure the sole outlook of the morning. The western sea lay like a thin line of gold beyond the moorland, and down in the valley in a bower of trees lights began to twinkle from the little castle. The remote mountains, hiding deep corries and woods in their bosom, were blurred by twilight to a single wall of hazy purple, which shut off this fairy glen impenetrably from the world. Fountainblue—the name rang witchingly in his ears. Fountainblue, the last home of the Good Folk, the last hold of the vanished kings, where the last wolf in Scotland was slain, and, as stories go, the last saint of the Great Ages taught the people,—what had Fountainblue to do with his hard world of facts and figures? The thought woke him to a sense of the present, and for a little he relished the paradox. He had left it long ago, an adventurous child; now he was returning with success behind

him and a portion of life's good things his own. He was rich, very rich and famous. Few men of forty had his power, and he had won it all in fair struggle with enemies and rivals and a niggardly world. He had been feared and hated, as he had been extravagantly admired; he had been rudely buffeted by fortune, and had met the blows with a fighter's joy. And out of it all something hard and austere had shaped itself, something very much a man, but a man with little heart and a lack of kindly human failings. He was master of himself in a curious degree, but the mastery absorbed his interests. Nor had he ever regretted it, when suddenly in this outlandish place the past swept over him, and he had a vision of a long avenue of vanished hopes. It pleased and disquieted him, and as the road dipped into the valley he remembered the prime cause of this mood of vagaries.

He had come up into the north with one purpose in view, he frankly told himself. The Etheridges were in Fountainblue, and ever since, eight months before, he had met Clara Etheridge, he had forgotten his ambitions. A casual neighbour at a dinner-party, a chance partner at a ball,—and then he had to confess that this slim, dark, bright-eyed girl had broken in irrevocably upon his contentment. At first he hated it for a weakness, then he welcomed the weakness with feverish ecstasy. He did nothing by halves, so he sought her company eagerly,

and, being a great man in his way, found things made easy for him. But the girl remained shy and distant, flattered doubtless by his attention, but watching him curiously as an intruder from an alien world. It was characteristic of the man that he never thought of a rival. His whole aim was to win her love; for rivalry with other men he had the contempt of a habitual conqueror. And so the uneasy wooing went on till the Etheridges left town, and he found himself a fortnight later with his work done and a visit before him to which he looked forward with all the vehemence of a nature whose strong point had always been its hope. As the road wound among the fir-trees, he tried to forecast the life at *Fountainblue*, and map out the future in his usual business-like way. But now the future refused to be thus shorn and parcelled: there was an unknown quantity in it which defied his efforts.

The house-party were sitting round the hall-fire when he entered. The high-roofed place, the flagged floor strewn with rugs, and its walls bright with the glow of fire on armour, gave him a boyish sense of comfort. Two men in knickerbockers were lounging on a settle, and at his entrance came forward to greet him. One was Sir Hugh Clanroyden, a follower of his own; the other he recognised as a lawyer named Durward. From the circle of women Miss Etheridge rose and welcomed him. Her mother was out, but would be

back for dinner; meantime he should be shown his room. He noticed that her face was browner, her hair a little less neat, and there seemed something franker and kindlier in her smile. So in a very good humour he went to rid himself of the dust of the roads.

Durward watched him curiously, and then turned, laughing, to his companion, as the girl came back to her friends with a heightened colour in her cheeks.

"Romeo the second," he said. "We are going to be spectators of a comedy. And yet, heaven knows! Maitland is not cast for comedy."

The other shook his head. "It will never come off. I've known Clara Etheridge most of my life, and I would as soon think of marrying a dancing-girl to a bishop. She is a delightful person, and my very good friend, but how on earth is she ever to understand Maitland? And how on earth can he see anything in her? Besides, there's another man."

Durward laughed. "Despencer! I suppose he will be a serious rival with a woman; but imagine him Maitland's rival in anything else! He'd break him like a rotten stick in half an hour. I like little Despencer, and I don't care about Maitland; but all the same it is absurd to compare the two, except in love-making."

"Lord, it will be comic," and Clanroyden stretched his long legs and lay back on a cushion. The girls were still chattering beside the fire, and the twilight was fast darkening into evening.

"You dislike Maitland?" he

asked, looking up. "Now, I wonder why?"

Durward smiled comically at the ceiling. "Oh, I know I oughtn't to. I know he's supposed to be a man's man, and that it's bad form for a man to say he dislikes him. But I'm honest enough to own to detesting him. I suppose he's great, but he's not great enough yet to compel one to fall down and worship him, and I hate greatness in the making. He goes through the world with his infernal arrogance and expects everybody to clear out of his way. I am told we live in an age of reason, but that fellow has burked reason. He never gives a reason for a thing he does, and if you try to argue he crushes you. He has killed good talk for ever with his confounded rudeness. All the little sophistries and conventions which make life tolerable are so much rubbish to him, and he shows it. The plague of him is that he can never make believe. He is as hard as iron, and as fierce as the devil, and about as unpleasant. You may respect the sledge-hammer type, but it's confoundedly dull. Why, the man has not the imagination of a rabbit, except in his description of people he dislikes. I liked him when he said that Layden reminded him of a dissipated dove, because I disliked Layden; but when Freddy Alton played the fool and people forgave him, because he was a good sort, Maitland sent him about his business, saying he had no further use for weaklings. He is so abominably cold-blooded and im-

placable that every one must fear him, and yet most people can afford to despise him. All the kind simple things of life are shut out of his knowledge. He has no nature, only a heart of stone and an iron will and a terribly subtle brain. Of course he is a great man—in a way, but at the best he is only half a man. And to think that he should have fallen in love, and be in danger of losing to Despencer! It's enough to make one forgive him."

Clanroyden laughed. "I can't think of Despencer. It's too absurd. But, seriously, I wish I saw Maitland well rid of this mood, married or cured. That sort of man doesn't take things easily."

"It reminds one of Theocritus and the Cyclops in love. Who would have thought to see him up in this moorland place, running after a girl? He doesn't care for sport."

"Do you know that he spent most of his childhood in this glen, and that he is keen about sport? He is too busy for many holidays, but he once went with Burton to the Caucasus, and Burton said the experience nearly killed him. He said that the fellow was tireless, and as mad and reckless as a boy with nothing to lose."

"Well, that simply bears out what I say of him. He does not understand the meaning of sport. When he gets keen about anything he pursues it as carefully and relentlessly as if it were something on the Stock Exchange. Now little Despencer is a genuine sportsman in his canary-like way.

He loves the art of the thing and the being out of doors. Maitland, I don't suppose, ever thinks whether it is a ceiling or the sky above his august head. Despencer——"

But at the moment Clanroyden uncrossed his legs, bringing his right foot down heavily upon his companion's left. Durward looked up and saw a young man coming towards him, smiling.

The newcomer turned aside to say something to the girls round the fire, and then came and sat on an arm of the settle. He was a straight, elegant person, with a well-tanned, regular face, and very pleasant brown eyes.

"I've had such an afternoon," he said. "You never saw a place like Cairnlorra. It's quite a little stone tower all alone in a fir-wood, and nothing else between the moor and the sea. It is furnished as barely as a prison, except for the chairs, which are priceless old Dutch things. Oh, and the silver at tea was the sort of thing that only South Africans can buy nowadays. Mrs Etheridge is devoured with envy. But the wonder of the house is old Miss Elphinstone. She must be nearly seventy and she looks forty-five, except for her hair. She speaks broad Scots, and she has the manners of a *marquise*. I would give a lot to have had Raeburn paint her. She reminded me of nothing so much as a hill-wind with her keen high-coloured old face. Yes, I have enjoyed the afternoon."

"Jack has got a new enthu-

siasm," said Durward. "I wish I were like you to have a new one once a-week. By the way, Maitland has arrived at last."

"Really!" said Despencer. "Oh, I forgot to tell you something which you would never have guessed. Miss Elphinstone is Maitland's aunt, and he was brought up a good deal at Cairnlorra. He doesn't take his manners from her, but I suppose he gets his cleverness from that side of the family. She disapproves of him strongly, so of course I had to defend him. And what do you think she said? 'He has betrayed his tradition. He has sold his birthright for a mess of pottage, and I wish him joy of his bargain!' Nice one for your party, Hugh."

Miss Etheridge had left the group at the fire and was standing at Despencer's side. She listened to him with a curious air of solicitude, like an affectionate sister. At the mention of Maitland's name Clanroyden had watched her narrowly, but her face did not change. And when Despencer asked, "Where is the new arrival?" she talked of him with the utmost nonchalance.

Maitland came down to dinner, ravenously hungry and in high spirits. Nothing was changed in this house since he had stared at the pictures and imagined terrible things about the armour and broken teacups with childish impartiality. His own favourite seat was still there, where, hidden by a tapestry screen, he had quar-

relled with Sylvia while their elders gossiped. This sudden flood of memories mellowed him towards the world. He was cordial to Despencer, forebore to think Durward a fool, and answered every one of Mr Etheridge's many questions. For the first time he felt the success of his life. The old house recalled his childhood, and the sight of Clanroyden, his devoted follower, reminded him of his power. Somehow the weariful crying for the moon, which had always tortured him, was exchanged for a glow of comfort, a shade of complacency in his haggard soul. . . . And then the sight of Clara dispelled his satisfaction.

Here in this cheerful homely party of friends he found himself out of place. On state occasions he could acquit himself with credit, for the man had a mind. He could make the world listen to him when he chose, and the choice was habitual. But now his loneliness claimed its lawful consequences, and he longed for the little friendly graces which he had so often despised. Despencer talked of scenery and weather with a tenderness to which this man, who loved nature as he loved little else, was an utter stranger. This elegant and appropriate sentiment would have worried him past endurance, if Miss Clara had not shared it. It was she who told some folk-tale about the Grey Correi with the prettiest hesitancy which showed her feeling. And then the talk drifted to books and people, flitting airily about their petty world. Maitland felt him-

self choked by their accomplishments. Most of the subjects were ones no sane man would trouble to think of, and yet here were men talking keenly about trifles and disputing with nimble-witted cleverness on the niceties of the trivial. Feeling miserably that he was the only silent one, he plunged desperately into the stream, found himself pulled up by Despencer and deftly turned. The event gave him the feeling of having been foiled by a kitten.

Angry with the world, angrier with his own angularity, he waited for the end of the meal. Times had not changed in this house since he had been saved by Sylvia from social disgrace. But when the women left the room he found life easier. His host talked of sport, and he could tell him more about Stob Ghabhar than any keeper. Despencer, victorious at dinner, now listened like a docile pupil. Durward asked a political question, and the answer came sharp and definite. Despencer demurred gently, after his fashion. "Well, but surely——" and a grimly smiling "What do you know about it?" closed the discussion. The old Maitland had returned for the moment.

The night was mild and impenetrably dark, and the fall of waters close at hand sounded like a remote echo. An open hall-door showed that some of the party had gone out to the garden, and the men followed at random. A glimmer of white frocks betrayed the women on the lawn, standing by the little river which slipped by cascade and glide from the glen to the

the low pasture-lands. In the featureless dark there was no clue to locality. The place might have been Berkshire or a suburban garden.

Suddenly the scream of some animal came from the near thicket. The women started and asked what it was.

"It was a hill-fox," said Maitland to Clara. "They used to keep me awake at nights on the hill. They come and bark close to your ear and give you nightmare."

The lady shivered. "Thank Heaven for the indoors," she said. "Now, if I had been the daughter of one of your old Donalds of the Isles, I should have known that cry only too well. Wild nature is an excellent background, but give me civilisation in front."

Maitland was looking into the wood. "You will find it creep far into civilisation if you look for it. There is a very narrow line between the warm room and the savage out-of-doors."

"There are miles of luxuries," the girl cried, laughing. "People who are born in the wrong century have to hunt over half the world before they find their savagery. It is all very tame, but I love the tame-

ness. You may call yourself primitive, Mr Maitland, but you are the most complex and modern of us all. What would Donald of the Isles have said to politics and the Stock Exchange?"

They had strolled back to the house. "Nevertheless I maintain my belief," said the man. "You call it miles of rampart; I call the division a line, a thread, a sheet of glass. But then, you see, you only know one side, and I only know the other."

"What preposterous affectation!" the girl said, as with a pretty shiver she ran indoors. Maitland stood for a moment looking back at the darkness. Within the firelit hall, with its rugs and little tables and soft chairs, he had caught a glimpse of Despencer smoking a cigarette. As he looked towards the hills he heard the fox's bark a second time, and then somewhere from the black distance came a hawk's scream, hoarse, lonely, and pitiless. The thought struck him that the sad elemental world of wood and mountain was far more truly his own than this cosy and elegant civilisation. And, oddly enough, the thought pained him.

III.

The day following was wet and windy, when a fire was grateful, and the hills, shrouded in grey mist, had no attractions. The party read idly in arm-chairs during the morning, and in the afternoon Maitland and Clanroyden went down to

the stream-mouth after sea-trout. So Despencer remained to talk to Clara, and, having played many games of picquet and grown heartily tired of each other, as tea-time approached they fell to desultory comments on their friends. Maitland was

beginning to interest the girl in a new way. Formerly he had been a great person who was sensible enough to admire her, but something remote and unattractive, for whom friendship (much less love) was impossible. But now she had begun to feel his power, his manhood. The way in which other men spoke of him impressed her unconsciously, and she began to ask Despencer questions which were gall and wormwood to that young man. But he answered honestly, after his fashion.

"Isn't he very rich?" she asked. "And I suppose he lives very plainly?"

"Rich as Croesus, and he sticks in his ugly rooms in the Albany because he never thinks enough about the thing to change. I've been in them once, and you never saw such a place. He's a maniac for fresh air, so they're large enough, but they're littered like a stable with odds and ends of belongings. He must have several thousand books, and yet he hasn't a decent binding among them. He hasn't a photograph of a single soul, and only one picture, which, I believe, was his father. But you never saw such a collection of whips and spurs and bits. It smells like a harness room, and there you find Maitland, when by any chance he is at home, working half the night and up to the eyes in papers. I don't think the man has any expenses except food and rent, for he wears the same clothes for years. And he has given up horses."

"Was he fond of horses?" Miss Clara asked.

"Oh, you had better ask him. I really can't tell you any more about him."

"But how do his friends get on with him?"

"He has hardly any, but his acquaintances, who are all the world, say he is the one great man of the future. If you want to read what people think of him, you had better look at the 'Monthly.'"

Under cover of this one ungenerous word Despencer made his escape, for he hated the business, but made it the rule of his life "never to crab a fellow." Miss Clara promptly sought out the 'Monthly,' and found twenty pages of superfine analysis and bitter, grudging praise. She read it with interest, and then lay back in her chair and tried to fix her thoughts. It is only your unhealthy young woman who worships strength in the abstract, and the girl tried to determine whether she admired the man as a power or disliked him as a brute. She chose a compromise, and the feeling which survived was chiefly curiosity.

The result of the afternoon was that when the fishermen returned, and Maitland, in dry clothes, appeared for tea, she settled herself beside him and prepared to talk. Maitland, being healthily tired, was in an excellent temper, and he found himself enticed into what for him was a rare performance, talk about himself. They were sitting apart from the others, and, ere ever he knew, he was answering the girl's questions with an absent-minded frankness. In a little she had drawn

from him the curious history of his life, which most men knew, but never from his own lips.

"I was at school for a year," he said, "and then my father died and our affairs went to pieces. I had to come back and go into an office, a sort of bank. I hated it, but it was good for me, for it taught me something, and my discontent made me ambitious. I had about eighty pounds a-year, and I saved from that. I worked too at books incessantly, and by-and-by I got an Oxford scholarship at an obscure college. I went up there, and found myself in a place where every one seemed well-off, while I was a pauper. However, it didn't trouble me much, for I had no ambition to play the fool. I only cared about two things—horses and metaphysics. I hated all games, which I thought only fit for children. I daresay it was foolish, but then you see I had had a queer upbringing. I managed to save a little money, and one vacation when I was wandering about in Norfolk, sleeping under haystacks and working in harvest fields when my supplies ran down, I came across a farmer. He was a good fellow and a sort of sportsman, and I took a fancy to him. He had a colt to sell which I fancied more, for I saw it had blood in it. So I bought it for what seemed a huge sum to me in those days, but I kept it at his farm and I superintended its education. I broke it myself and taught it to jump, and by-and-by in my third year I brought it to

Oxford and entered for the Grind on it. People laughed at me, but I knew my own business. The little boys who rode in the thing knew nothing about horses, and not one in ten could ride; so I entered and won. It was all I wanted, for I could sell my horse then, and the fellow who rode second bought it. It was decent of him, for I asked a big figure, and I think he had an idea of doing me a kindness. I made him my private secretary the other day."

"You mean Lord Drapier?" she asked.

"Yes—Drapier. That gave me money to finish off and begin in town. Oh, and I had got a first in my schools. I knew very little about anything except metaphysics, and I never went to tutors. I suppose I knew a good deal more than the examiners in my own subject, and anyhow they felt obliged to give me my first after some grumbling. Then I came up to town with just sixty pounds in my pocket, but I had had the education of a gentleman."

Maitland looked out of the window, and the sight of the mist-clad hills recalled him to himself. He wondered why he was telling the girl this story, and he stopped suddenly.

"And what did you do in town?" she asked, with interest.

"I hung round and kept my eyes open. I nearly starved, for I put half my capital on a horse which I thought was safe, and lost it. By-and-by, quite by accident, I came

across a curious fellow, Ransome — you probably have heard his name. I met him in some stables where he was buying a mare, and he took a fancy to me. He made me his secretary, and then, because I liked hard work, he let me see his business. It was enormous, for the man was a genius after a fashion; and I slaved away in his office and down at the docks for about three years. He paid me just enough to keep body and soul together and cover them with clothes; but I didn't grumble, for I had a sort of idea that I was on my probation. And then my apprenticeship came to an end."

"Yes," said the girl.

"Yes; for you see Ransome was an odd character. He had a sort of genius for finance, and within his limits he was even a great administrator. But in everything else he was as simple as a child. His soul was idyllic: he loved green fields and Herrick and sheep. So it had always been his fancy to back out some day and retire with his huge fortune to some country place and live as he pleased. It seemed that he had been training me from the first day I went into the business, and now he cut the rope and left the whole enormous concern in my hands. I needed every atom of my wits, and the first years were a hard struggle. I became of course very rich; but I had to do more, I had to keep the thing at its old level. I had

no natural turn for the work, and I had to acquire capacity by sheer grind. However, I managed it, and then, when I felt my position sure, I indulged myself with a hobby and went into politics."

"You call it a hobby?"

"Certainly. The ordinary political career is simply a form of trifling. There's no trade on earth where a man has to fear so few able competitors. Of course it's very public and honourable and that sort of thing, and I like it; but sometimes it wearies me to death."

The girl was looking at him with curious interest. "Do you always get what you want?" she asked.

"Never," he said.

"Then is your success all disappointment?"

"Oh, I generally get a bit of my ambitions, which is all one can hope for in this world."

"I suppose your ambitions are not idyllic, like Mr Ransome's?"

He laughed. "No, I suppose not. I never could stand your Corot meadows and ivied cottages and village church bells. But I am at home in this glen, or used to be."

"You said that last night, and I thought it was affectionation," said the girl; "but perhaps you are right. I'm not at home in this scenery, at any rate in this weather. Ugh, look at that mist driving and that spur of Stob Ghabhar! I really must go and sit by the fire."

IV.

The next day dawned clear and chill, with a little frost to whiten the heather; but by mid-day the sun had turned August to June, and sea and land drowsed in a mellow heat. Maitland was roused from his meditations with a pipe on a garden-seat by the appearance of Miss Clara, her eyes bright with news. He had taken her in to dinner the night before, and for the first time in his life had found himself talking easily to a woman. Her interest of the afternoon had not departed; and Despencer in futile disgust shunned the drawing-room, his particular paradise, and played billiards with Clanroyden in the spirit of an unwilling martyr.

"We are going out in the yacht," Miss Clara cried, as she emerged from the shadow of a fuchsia-hedge, "to the Isles of the Waves, away beyond the Seal's Headland. Do you know the place, Mr Maitland?"

"Eilean na Cille? Yes. It used to be dangerous for currents, but a steam-yacht does not require to fear them."

"Well, we'll be ready to start at twelve, and I must go in to give orders about lunch."

A little later she came out with a bundle of letters in her hands. "Here are your letters, Mr Maitland; but you mustn't try to answer them, or you'll be late." He put the lot in his jacket pocket and looked up at the laughing girl. "My work is six hundred miles behind me," he said, "and to-day I have only the Eilean na Cille to think of."

And, as she passed by, another name took the place of the Eilean, and it seemed to him that at last he had found the link which was to bind together the two natures—his boyhood and his prime.

Out on the loch the sun was beating with that steady August blaze which is more torrid than midsummer. But as the yacht slipped between the horns of the land, it came into a broken green sea with rollers to the north where the tireless Atlantic fretted on the reefs. In a world of cool salt winds and the golden weather of afternoon, with the cries of tern and gull about the bows and the foam and ripple of green water in the wake, the party fell into a mood of supreme contentment. The restless Miss Clara was stricken into a figure of contemplation, which sat in the bows and watched the hazy blue horizon and the craggy mainland hills in silent delight. Maitland was revelling in the loss of his isolation. He had ceased to be alone, a leader, and for the moment felt himself one of the herd, a devotee of humble pleasures. His mind was blank, his eyes filled only with the sea, and the lady of his devotion, in that happy moment of romance, seemed to have come at last within the compass of his hopes.

The Islands of the Waves are low green ridges which rise little above the highest tide-mark. The grass is stiff with salt, the sparse heather and rushes are

crooked with the winds, but there are innumerable little dells where a light wild scrub flourishes, and in one a spring of sweet water sends a tiny stream to the sea. The yacht's company came ashore in boats, and tea was made with a great bustle beside the well, while the men lay idly in the bent and smoked. All wind seemed to have died down, a soft, cool, airless peace like a June evening was abroad, and the heavy surging of the tides had sunk to a distant whisper. Maitland lifted his head, sniffed the air, and looked uneasily to the west, meeting the eye of one of the sailors engaged in the same scrutiny. He beckoned the man to him.

"What do you make of the weather?" he asked.

The sailor, an East-coast man from Arbroath, shook his head. "It's ower lown a' of a sudden," he said. "It looks like mair wind nor we want, but I think it'll haud till the morn."

Maitland nodded and lay down again. He smiled at the return of his old sea craft and weather-lore, on which he had prided himself in his boyhood; and when Miss Clara came up to him with tea she found him grinning vacantly at the sky.

"What a wonderful lull in the wind," she said. "When I was here last these were real isles of the waves, with spray flying over them and a great business to land. But now they might be the island in Fountain-blue lake."

"Did you ever hear of the Ocean Quiet?" he asked. "I believe it to be a translation

of a Gaelic word which is a synonym for death, but it is also a kind of natural phenomenon. Old people at Cairnlorra used to talk of it. They said that sometimes fishermen far out at sea in blowing weather came into a place of extraordinary peace, where the whole world was utterly still and they could hear their own hearts beating."

"What a pretty fancy!" said the girl.

"Yes; but it had its other side. The fishermen rarely came home alive, and if they did they were queer to the end of their days. Another name for the thing was the Breathing of God. It is an odd idea, the passing from the wholesome turmoil of nature to the uncanny place where God crushes you by His silence."

"All the things to eat are down by the fire," she said, laughing. "Do you know, if you weren't what you are, people might think you a poet, Mr Maitland. I thought you cared for none of these things."

"What things?" he asked. "I don't care for poetry. I am merely repeating the nonsense I was brought up on. Shall I talk to you about politics?"

"Heaven forbid! And now I will tell you my own story about these isles. There is a hermit's cell on one of them and crosses, like Iona. The hermit lived alone all winter, and was fed by boats from the shore when the weather was calm. When one hermit died another took his place, and no one knew where he came from. Now one day a great lord in

Scotland disappeared from his castle. He was the King's Warden of the Marches and the greatest soldier of his day, but he disappeared utterly out of men's sight, and people forgot about him. Long years after the Northmen in a great fleet came down upon these isles, and the little chiefs fled before them. But suddenly among them there appeared an old man, the hermit of the Wave Islands, who organised resistance and gathered a strong army. No one dared oppose him, and the quarrelsome petty chiefs forgot their quarrels under his banner, for he had the air of one born to command. At last he met the invaders in the valley of Fountainblue, and beat them so utterly that few escaped to their ships. He fell himself in the first charge, but not before his followers had heard his battle-cry of 'Saint Bride,' and known that the Hermit of the Isles and the great King's Warden were the same."

"That was a common enough thing in wild times. Men grew tired of murder and glory and waving banners, and wanted quiet to make their peace with their own souls. I should have thought the craving scarcely extinct yet."

"Then here is your chance, Mr Maitland," said the girl, laughing. "A little trouble would make the hut habitable, and you could simply disappear, leaving no address to forward your letters to. Think of the sensation, 'Disappearance of a Secretary of State,' and the wild theories and the obituaries. Then some day when the

land question became urgent on the mainland, you would turn up suddenly, settle it with extraordinary wisdom, and die after confiding your life-story to some country reporter. But I am afraid it would scarcely do, for you would be discovered by Scotland Yard, which would be ignominious."

"It is a sound idea, but the old device is too crude. However, it could be managed differently. Some day, when civilisation grows oppressive, Miss Clara, I will remember your advice."

The afternoon shadows were beginning to lengthen, and from the west a light sharp wind was crisping the sea. The yacht was getting up steam, and boats were coming ashore for the party. The deep blue waters were flushing rose-pink as the level westering sun smote them from the summit of a cloud-bank. The stillness had gone, and the air was now full of sounds and colour. Miss Clara, with an eye on the trim yacht, declared her disapproval. "It is an evening for the cutter," she cried, and in spite of Mrs Etheridge's protests she gave orders for it to be made ready. Then the self-willed young woman looked round for company. "Will you come, Mr Maitland?" she said. "You can sail a boat, can't you? And Mr Despen- cer, I shall want you to talk to me when Mr Maitland is busy. We shall race the yacht, for we ought to be able to get through the Scart's Neck with this wind."

"I am not sure if you are

wise, Miss Clara," and Maitland pulled down his brows as he looked to the west. "It will be wind—in a very little, and you stand the chance of a wetting."

"I don't mind. I want to get the full good of such an evening. You want to be near the water to understand one of our sunsets. I can be a barbarian too, you know."

It was not for Maitland to grumble at this friendliness; so he followed her into the cutter with Despencer, who had no love for the orders but much for her who gave them. He took the helm and steered, with directions from the lady, from his memory of the intricate coast. Despencer with many rugs looked to Miss Clara's comfort, and, having assured his own, was instantly entranced with the glories of the evening.

The boat tripped along for a little in a dazzle of light into the silvery grey of the open water. Far in front lay the narrow gut called the Scart's Neck, which was the by-way to the loch of Fountainblue. Then Maitland at the helm felt the sheets suddenly begin to strain, and, looking behind, saw that the Isles of the Waves were almost lost in the gloom, and that the roseate heavens were quickly darkening behind. The wind which he had feared was upon them; a few seconds more and it was sending the cutter staggering among billows. He could hardly make himself heard in the din, as he roared directions to Despencer about disposing of his person in another part of the boat.

The girl with flushed face was laughing in pure joy of the storm. She caught a glimpse of Maitland's serious eye and looked over the gunwale at the threatening west. Then she too became quiet, and meekly sat down on the thwart to which he motioned her.

The gale made the Scart's Neck impossible, and the murky sky seemed to promise greater fury ere the morning. Twilight was falling, and the other entrance to the quiet loch meant the rounding of a headland and a difficult course through a little archipelago. It was the only way, for return was out of the question, and it seemed vain to risk the narrow chances of the short cut. Maitland looked down at his two companions, and reflected with pleasure that he was the controller of their fates. He had sailed much as a boy, and he found in this moment of necessity that his old lore returned to him. He felt no mistrust of his powers: whatever the gale he could land them at Fountainblue, though it might take hours and involve much discomfort. He remembered the coast like his own name; he relished the grim rage of the elements, and he kept the cutter's head out to sea with a delight in the primal conflict.

The last flickering rays of light, coming from the screen of cloud, illumined the girl's pale face, and the sight disquieted him. There was a hint of tragedy in this game. Despencer, nervously self-controlled, was reassuring Clara. Ploughing onward in the black-

ening night in a frail boat on a wind-threshed sea was no work for a girl. But it was Despencer who was comforting her! Well, it was his proper work. He was made for the business of talking soft things to women. Maitland, his face hard with spray, looked into the darkness with a kind of humour in his heart. And then, as the boat shore and dipped into the storm, its human occupants seemed to pass out of the picture, and it was only a shell tossed on great waters in the unfathomable night. The evening had come, moonless and starless, and Maitland steered as best he could by the deeper blackness which was the configuration of the shore. Something loomed up that he knew for the headland, and they were drifting in a quieter stretch of sea, with the breakers grumbling ahead from the little tangle of islands.

Suddenly he fell into one of the abstractions which had always dogged him through his strenuous life. His mind was clear, he chose his course with a certain precision, but the winds and waves had become to him echoes of echoes. Wet with spray and shifting his body constantly with the movement of the boat, it yet was all a phantasmal existence, while his thoughts were following an airy morrice in a fairyland world. The motto of his house, the canting motto of old reivers, danced in his brain — "*Parmi ceu haut bois conduyrai m'amie*" — "Through the high wood I will conduct my love" — and in a land of green forests, dragon-haunted, he was piloting Clara

robed in a quaint medieval gown, himself in speckless plate-armour. His fancy fled through a score of scenes, sometimes on a dark heath, or by a lonely river, or among great mountains, but always the lady and her protector. Clara, looking up from Despencer's side, saw his lips moving, noted that his eyes were glad, and for a moment hoped better things of their chances.

Then suddenly she was numb with alarm, for the cutter heeled over, and but that Maitland woke to clear consciousness and swung the sheet loose, all would have been past. The adventure nerved him and quickened his senses. The boat seemed to move more violently than the wind drove her, and in the utter blackness he felt for the first time the grip of the waters. The ugly cruel monster had wakened, and was about to wreak its anger on the toy. And then he remembered the currents which raced round Eilean Rìgh and the scattered isles. Dim shapes loomed up, shapes strange and unfriendly, and he felt miserably that he was as helpless now as Despencer. To the left night had wholly shut out the coast; his one chance was to run for one of the isles and risk a landing. It would be a dreary waiting for the dawn, but safety had come before any comfort. And yet, he remembered, the little islands were rock-bound and unfriendly, and he was hurrying forward in the grip of a black current with a gale behind and unknown reefs before.

And then he seemed to remember something of this cur-

rent which swept along the isles. In a little—so he recalled a boyish voyage in clear weather—they would come to a place where the sea ran swift and dark beside a kind of natural wharf. Here he had landed once upon a time, but it was a difficult enterprise, needing a quick and a far leap at the proper moment, for the stream ran very fast. But if this leap were missed there was still a chance. The isle was the great Eilean Righ, and the current swung round its southern end, and then, joining with another stream, turned up its far side, and for a moment washed the shore. But if this second chance were missed, then nothing remained but to fall into the great sea-going stream and be carried out to death in the wide Atlantic. He strained his eyes to the right for Eilean Righ. Something seemed to approach, as they bent under an access of the gale. They bore down upon it, and he struggled to keep the boat's head away, for at this pace to grate upon rock would mean upsetting. The sail was down, fluttering amidships like a captive bird, and the gaunt mast bowed with the wind. A horrible fascination, the inertia of nightmare, seized him. The motion was so swift and beautiful; why not go on and onward, listlessly? And then, conquering the weakness, he leaned forward and called to Clara. She caught his arm like a child, and he pulled her up beside him. Then he beckoned Despencer, and, shrieking against the din, told him to follow him when he jumped.

Despencer nodded, his teeth chattering with cold and the novel business. Suddenly out of the darkness, a yard on their right, loomed a great flat rock along which the current raced like a mill-lade. The boat made to strike, but Maitland forced her nose out to sea, and then as the stern swung round he seized his chance. Holding Clara with his left arm he stood up, balanced himself for a moment on the gunwale, and jumped. He landed sprawling on his side on some wet seaweed, over which the sea was lipping, but undeniably on land. As he pulled himself up he had a vision of the cutter, dancing like a cork, vanishing down the current into the darkness.

Holding the girl in his arms he picked his way across the rock pools to the edge of the island heather. For a moment he thought Clara had fainted. She lay still and inert, her eyes shut, her hair falling foolishly over her brow. He sprinkled some water on her face, and she revived sufficiently to ask her whereabouts. He was crossing the island to find Despencer, but he did not tell her. "You are safe," he said, and he carried her over the rough ground as lightly as a child. An intense exhilaration had seized him. He ran over the flats and strode up the low hillocks with one thought possessing his brain. To save Despencer, that of course was the far-off aim on his mind's horizon, but all the foreground was filled with the lady. "*Parmi ceu haut bois*"—the old poetry of the world had

penetrated to his heart. The black night and the wild wind and the sea were the ministrants of love. The hollow shams of life with their mincing conventions had departed, and in this savage out-world a man stood for a man. The girl's light tweed jacket was no match for this chill gale, so he stopped for a moment, took off his own shooting-coat and put it round her. And then, as he came over a little ridge, he was aware of a grumbling of waters and the sea.

The beach was hidden in a veil of surf which sprinkled the very edge of the bracken. Beyond, the dark waters were boiling like a caldron, for the tides in this little bay ran with the fury of a river in spate. A moon was beginning to struggle through the windy clouds, and surf, rock, and wave began to shape themselves out of the night. Clara stood on the sand, a slim, desolate figure, and clung to Maitland's arm. She was still dazed with the storm and the baffling suddenness of change. Maitland, straining his eyes out to sea, was in a waking dream. With the lady no toil was too great, no darkness terrible; for her he would scale the blue air and plough the hills and do all the lover's feats of romance. And then suddenly he shook her hand roughly from his arm and ran forward, for he saw something coming down the tide.

Before he left the boat he had lowered the sail, and the cutter swung to the current, an odd amorphous thing, now heeling over with a sudden

gust and now pulled back to balance by the strong grip of the water. A figure seemed to sit in the stern, making feeble efforts to steer. Maitland knew the coast and the ways of the sea. He ran through the surf-ring into the oily-black eddies, shouting to Despencer to come overboard. Soon he was not ten yards from the cutter's line, where the current made a turn towards the shore before it washed the iron rocks to the right. He found deep water, and in two strokes was in the grip of the tides and borne wildly towards the reef. He prepared himself for what was coming, raising his feet and turning his right shoulder to the front. And then with a shock he was pinned against the rock-wall, with the tides tugging at his legs, while his hands clung desperately to a shelf. Here he remained, yelling directions to the coming boat. Surf was in his eyes, so that at first he could not see, but at last in a dip of the waves he saw the cutter, a man's form in the stern, plunging not twenty yards away. Now was his chance or never, for while the tide would take a boat far from his present place of vantage, it would carry a lighter thing, such as a man's body, in a circle nearer to the shore. He yelled again, and the world seemed to him quiet for a moment, while his voice echoed eerily in the void. Despencer must have heard it, for the next moment he saw him slip pluckily overboard, making the cutter heel desperately with his weight. And then—it seemed an age—a man, choking and

struggling weakly, came down the current, and, pushing his right arm out against the rush of water, he had caught the swimmer by the collar and drawn him in to the side of the rock.

Then came the harder struggle. Maitland's left hand was numbing, and though he had a foothold, it was too slight to lean on with full weight. A second lassitude oppressed him, a supreme desire to slip into those racing tides and rest. He was in no panic about death, but he had the practical man's love of an accomplished task, and it nerved him to the extreme toil. Slowly by inches he drew himself up the edge of the reef, cherishing jealously each grip and foothold, with Despencer, half-choked and all but fainting, hanging heavily on his right arm. Blind with spray, sick with sea-water, and aching with his labours, he gripped at last the tangles of sea-weed, which meant the flat surface, and with one final effort raised himself and Despencer to the top. There he lay for a few minutes with his head in a rock-pool till the first weariness had passed.

He staggered with his burden in his arms along the ragged reef to the strip of sand where Clara was weeping hysterically. The sight of her restored Maitland to vigour, the appeal of her lonely figure there in the wet brackens. She must think them all dead, he reflected, and herself desolate, for she could not have interpreted rightly his own wild rush into the waves. When she heard his

voice she started, as if at a ghost, and then seeing his burden, ran towards him. "Oh, he is dead!" she cried. "Tell me! tell me!" and she clasped the inert figure so that her arm crossed Maitland's. Despencer, stupefied and faint, was roused to consciousness by a woman's kisses on his cheek, and still more by his bearer abruptly laying him on the heather. Clara hung over him like a mother, calling him by soft names, pushing his hair from his brow, forgetful of her own wet and sorry plight. And meanwhile Maitland stood watching, while his palace of glass was being shivered about his ears.

Aforetime his arrogance had kept him from any thought of jealousy; now the time and place were too solemn for trifling, and facts were laid bare before him. Sentiment does not bloom readily in a hard nature, but if it once comes to flower it does not die without tears and lamentation. The wearied man, who stood quietly beside the hysterical pair, had a moment of peculiar anguish. Then he conquered sentiment, as he had conquered all other feelings of whose vanity he was assured. He was now, as he was used to be, a man among children; and as a man he had his work. He bent over Clara. "I know a hollow in the middle of the island," he said, "where we can camp the night. I'll carry Despencer, for his ankle is twisted. Do you think you could try to walk?"

The girl followed obediently, her eyes only on her lover. Her trust in the other was infinite,

her indifference to him impenetrable; while he, hopelessly conscious of his fate, saw in the slim dishevelled figure at his side the lost lady, the mistress for him of all romance and generous ambitions. The new springs in his life were choked; he had still his work, his power, and, thank God, his courage; but the career which ran out to the horizon of his vision was black and loveless. And he held in his arms the thing which had frustrated him, the thing he had pulled out of the deep in peril of his body; and at the thought life for a moment seemed to be only a comic opera with tragedy to shift the scenes.

He found a cleft between two rocks with a soft floor of heather. There had been no rain, so the bracken was dry, and he gathered great armfuls and driftwood logs from the shore. Soon he had a respectable pile of timber, and then in the nick of the cleft he built a fire. His matches, being in his jacket pocket, had escaped the drenchings of salt water, and soon with a smoke and crackling and sweet scent of burning wood, a fire was going cheerily in the darkness. Then he made a couch of bracken, and laid there the still feeble Despencer. The man was more weak than ill; but for his ankle he was unhurt; and a little brandy would have brought him to himself. But this could not be provided, and Clara saw in his condition only the sign of mortal sickness. With haggard eyes she watched by him, easing his head, speaking soft kind words, forgetful of her own cold

and soaking clothes. Maitland drew her gently to the fire, shook down the bracken to make a rest for her head, and left a pile of logs ready for use. "I am going to the end of the island," he said, "to light a fire for a signal. It is the only part which they can see on the mainland, and if they see the blaze they will come off for us as soon as it is light." The pale girl listened obediently. This man was the master, and in his charge was the safety of her lover and herself.

Maitland turned his back upon the warm nook, and stumbled along the ridge to the northern extremity of the isle. It was not a quarter of a mile away, but the land was so rough with gullies and crags that the journey took him nearly an hour. Just off the extreme point was a flat rock, sloping northward to a considerable height, a place from which a beacon could penetrate far over the mainland. He gathered brackens for kindling, and driftwood which former tides had heaped on the beach; and then with an armful he splashed through the shallow surf to the rock. Scrambling to the top, he found a corner where a fire might be lit, a place conspicuous and yet sheltered. Here he laid his kindling, and then in many wet journeys he carried his stores of firewood from the mainland to the rock. The lighting was nervous work, for he had few matches; but at last the dampish wood had caught, and tongues of flame shot up out of the smoke. Meantime the wind had sunk lower, the breakers seemed to have been

left behind, and the eternal surge of the tides became the dominant sound to the watcher by the beacon.

And then, it seemed to him, the great convulsions of the night died away, and a curious peace came down upon the waters. The fire leaped in the air, the one living thing in a hushed and expectant world. It was not the quiet of sleep but of a sudden cessation, like the lull after a great flood or a snowslip. The tides still eddied and swayed, but it was noiselessly; the world moved, yet without sound or friction. The bitter wind which chilled his face and stirred up the red embers was like a phantom blast, without the roughness of a common gale. For a moment he seemed to be set upon a huge mountain, with the world infinitely remote beneath his feet. To all men there come moments of loneliness of body, and to some few the mingled ecstasy and grief of loneliness of soul. The child-tale of the Ocean Quiet came back to him, the hour of the Breathing of God. Surely the great silence was now upon the world. But it was an evil presage, for all who sailed into it were homeless wanderers for ever after. Ah well! he had always been a wanderer, and the last gleam of home had been left behind, where by the fire-light in the cold cranny a girl was crooning over her lover.

His past, his monotonous, brilliant past, slipped by with the knotless speed of a vision. He saw a boy, haunted with dreams, chafing at present delights, clutching evermore at the faint things of fancy. He

saw a man, playing with the counters which others played with, fighting at first for bare existence and then for power and the pride of life. Success came over his path like a false dawn, but he knew in his heart that he had never sought it. What was that remote ineffable thing he had followed? Here in the quiet of the shadowy waters he had the moment of self-revelation which comes to all, and hopes and dim desires seemed to stand out with the clearness of accomplished facts. There had always been something elect and secret at the back of his fiercest ambitions. The ordinary cares of men had been to him but little things to be played with; he had won by despising them; casting them from him, they had fallen into the hollow of his hand. And he had held them at little, finding his reward in his work, and in a certain alertness and freshness of spirit which he had always cherished. There is a story of island-born men who carry into inland places and the streets of cities the noise of sea-water in their ears, and hear continually the tern crying and the surf falling. So from his romantic boyhood this man had borne an arrogance towards the things of the world which had given him a contemptuous empire over a share of them. As he saw the panorama of his life no place or riches entered into it, but only himself, the haggard, striving soul, growing in power, losing, perhaps, in wisdom. And then, at the end of the way, Death, to shrivel the power to dust, and with the might of his sunbeam to waken

to life the forgotten world of the spirit.

In the hush he seemed to feel the wheel and the drift of things, the cosmic order of nature. He forgot his weariness and his plashing clothes as he put more wood on the beacon and dreamed into the night. The pitiless sea, infinite, untamable, washing the Poles and hiding Earth's secrets in her breast, spoke to him with a far-remembered voice. The romance of the remote isles, the homes of his people, floating still in a twilight of old story, rose out of the darkness. His life, with its routine and success, seemed in a moment hollow, a child's game, unworthy of a man. The little social round, the manipulation of half-truths, the easy victories over fools—surely this was not the task for him. He was a dreamer, but a dreamer with an iron hand; he was scarcely in the prime of life; the world was wide and his chances limitless. One castle of cards had already been overthrown; the Ocean Quiet was under-

mining another. He was sick of domesticity of every sort—of town, of home, of civilisation. The sad elemental world was his, the fury and the tenderness of nature, the peace of the wilds which old folk had called the Breathing of God. "Parmi ceu haut bois conduyrat m'amie"—this was still his motto, to carry untarnished to the end an austere and beautiful dream. His little ambitions had been but shreds and echoes and shadows of this supreme reality. And his love had been but another such simulacrum; for what he had sought was no foolish, laughing girl, but the Immortal Shepherdess, who, singing the old songs of youth, drives her flocks to the hill in the first dewy dawn of the world.

Suddenly he started and turned his head. Day was breaking in a red windy sky, and somewhere a boat's oars were plashing in the sea. And then he realised for the first time that he was cold and starving and soaked to the bone.

V.

Mr Henry Durward to Lady Claudia Etheridge.

"... Things have happened, my dear Clo, since I last wrote; time has passed; to-morrow I leave this place and go to stalk with Drapier; and yet in the stress of departure I take time to answer the host of questions with which you assailed me. I am able to give you the best of news. You have won your bet.

Your prophecy about the conduct of the 'other Etheridge girl' has come out right. They are both here, as it happens, having come on from Fountainblue,—both the hero and the heroine, I mean, of this most reasonable romance. You know Jack Despencer, one of the best people in the world, though a

trifle given to chirping. But I don't think the grasshopper will become a burden to Miss Clara, for she likes that sort of thing. She must, for there is reason to believe that she refused for its sake the greatest match—I speak with all reverence—which this happy country could offer. I know you like Maitland as little as I do, but we agree in admiring the Colossus from a distance. Well, the Colossus has, so to speak, been laid low by a frivolous member of your sex. It is all a most romantic tale. Probably you have heard the gist of it, but here is the full and circumstantial account.

“We found Maitland beside the fire he had been feeding all night, and I shall never forget his figure alone in the dawn on that rock, drenched and dishevelled, but with his haggard white face set like a Crusader's. He took us to a kind of dell in the centre of the island, where we found Clara and Despencer shivering beside a dying fire. He had a twisted ankle and had got a bad scare, while she was perfectly composed, though she broke down when we got home. It must have been an awful business for both, but Maitland never seems to have turned a hair. I want to know two things. First, how in the presence of great danger he managed to get his dismissal from the lady,—for get it he assuredly did, and Despencer at once appeared in the part of the successful lover; second, what part he played in the night's events. Clara remembered little, Despencer only

knew that he had been pulled out of the sea, but over all Maitland seems to have brooded like a fate. As usual he told us nothing. It was always his way to give the world results and leave it to find out his methods for itself. . . .

“Despencer overwhelmed him with gratitude. His new happiness made him in love with life, and he included Maitland in the general affection. The night's events seemed to have left their mark on the great man also. He was very quiet, forgot to be rude to anybody, and was kind to both Clara and Despencer. It is his way of acknowledging defeat, the great gentleman's way, for, say what we like about him, he is a tremendous gentleman, one of the last of the breed. . . .

“And then he went away—two days later. Just before he went Hugh Clanroyden and myself were talking in the library, which has a window opening on a flower-garden. Despencer was lying in an invalid's chair under a tree and Clara was reading to him. Maitland was saying good-bye, and he asked for Despencer. We told him that he was with Clara in the garden. He smiled one of those odd scarce smiles of his, and went out to them. When I saw his broad shoulders bending over the chair and the strong face looking down at the radiant Jack with his amiable good looks, confound it, Clo, I had to contrast the pair, and admit with Shakespeare the excellent foppery of the world. Well-a-day! ‘Smooth Jacob still robs homely Esau.’ And perhaps it

is a good thing, for we are most of us Jacobs, and Esau is an uncomfortable fellow in our midst.

"A week later came the surprising, the astounding news that he had taken the African Governorship. A career ruined, every one said, the finest chance in the world flung away; and then people speculated, and the story came out in bits, and there was only one explanation. It is the right one, as I think you will agree, but it points to some hidden weakness in that iron soul that he could be moved to fling over the ambitions of years because of a girl's choice. He will go and bury himself in the wilds, and our party will have to find another leader. Of course he will do his work well, but it is

just as if I were to give up my chances of the Woolsack for a county-court judgeship. He will probably be killed, for he has a million enemies; he is perfectly fearless, and he does not understand the arts of compromise. It was a privilege, I shall always feel, to have known him. He was a great man, and yet—intellect, power, character, were at the mercy of a girl's caprice. As I write, I hear Clara's happy laugh below in the garden, probably at some witticism of the fortunate Jack's. Upon which, with my usual pride in the obvious, I am driven to reflect that the weak things in life may confound the strong, and that, after all, the world is to the young. . . ."

VI.

*Sir Hugh Clanroyden to Mr Henry Durward.
Some years later.*

" . . . I am writing this on board ship, as you will see from the heading, and shall post it when I get to the Cape. You have heard of my appointment, and I need not tell you how deep were my searchings of heart before I found courage to accept. Partly I felt that I had got my chance; partly I thought — an inconsequent feeling — that Maitland, if he had lived, would have been glad to see me in the place. But I am going to wear the Giant's Robe, and Heaven knows I have not the shoulders to fill it. Yet I am happy in thinking that I am in a small sense faithful to his memory.

"No further news, I suppose, has come of the manner of his death? Perhaps we shall never know, for it was on one of those Northern expeditions with a few men by which he held the frontier. I wonder if any one will ever write fully the history of all that he did? It must have been a titanic work, but his methods were always so quiet that people accepted his results like a gift from Providence. He was given, one gathers, a practically free hand, and he made the country — four years' work of a man of genius. They wished to bring his body home, but he made them bury him where he fell

—a characteristic last testament. And so he has gone out of the world into the world's history.

"I am still broken by his death, but, now that he is away, I begin to see him more clearly. Most people, I think, misunderstood him. I was one of his nearest friends, and I only knew bits of the man. For one thing—and I hate to use the vulgar word—he was the only aristocrat I ever heard of. Our classes are three-fourths of them of yesterday's growth, without the tradition, character, manner, or any trait of an aristocracy. And the few, who are nominally of the blood, have gone to seed in mind, or are spoilt by coarse marriages, or, worst of all, have the little trifling superior airs of incompetence. But he, he had the most transcendent breeding in mind and spirit. He had no need for self-assertion, for his most casual acquaintances put him at once in a different class from all other men. He had never a trace of a vulgar ideal; men's opinions, worldly honour, the common pleasures of life, were merely degrees of the infinitely small. And yet he was no bloodless mystic. If race means anything, he had it to perfection. Dreams and fancies to him were the realities, while facts were the shadows which he made dance as it pleased him.

"The truth is, that he was that rarest of mortals, the iron dreamer. He thought in æons and cosmic cycles, and because of it he could do what he pleased in life. We call a man practical

if he is struggling in the crowd with no knowledge of his whereabouts, and yet in our folly we deny the name to the clear-sighted man who can rule the crowd from above. And here I join issue with you and everybody else. You thought it was Miss Clara's refusal which sent him abroad and interrupted his career. I read the thing otherwise. His love for the girl was a mere accident, a survival of the domestic in an austere spirit. Something, I do not know what, showed him his true desires. She may have rejected him; he may never have spoken to her; in any case the renunciation had to come. You must remember that that visit to *Fountainblue* was the first that he had paid since his boyhood to his boyhood's home. Those revisittings have often a strange trick of self-revelation. I believe that in that night on the island he saw our indoor civilisation and his own destiny in so sharp a contrast that he could not choose but make the severance. He found work where there could be small hope of honour or reward, but many a chance for a hero. And I am sure that he was happy, and that it was the longed-for illumination that dawned on him with the bullet which pierced his heart.

"But, you will say, the fact remains that he was once in love with Miss Clara, and that she would have none of him. I do not deny it. He was never a favourite with women; but, thank Heaven, I have better things to do than study their peculiarities. . . ."

PORTLAND.

THERE are few places in the United Kingdom whose name is of so familiar and sinister a significance as Portland, and still fewer places whose real characteristics are so utterly unknown to the great majority of tourists. For most people Portland spells penal servitude and nothing more; but Portland prison is only a thing of last century, a thing remote and apart from the Portlanders and their traditions, which are old—world-old. One might live for months, perhaps years, in the isle without having occasion either to mention or to approach the convict settlement,—“The Grove,” as it is euphemistically termed,—without having any dealings, social or commercial, with the regiment at the Verne. Therefore I do not propose to refer to either the penal or the military aspects of Portland, nor to the breakwaters and harbourage, perhaps the finest in England: these are guide-book matters. They enter so little into the daily life of the average islander, and are contained in so wholly different an atmosphere, that a whole story may be written, as is Hardy’s ‘Well-beloved,’ without the slightest reference to either of the above exotic institutions. But when one begins to speak of Portland itself—not as the casual tourist, but as a quondam dweller and lover of this place—then it becomes difficult to

steer clear of an enthusiasm apt to appear exaggerated to those who have never felt it. Never was there a spot of more concentrated romance and beauty; never one that so endeared itself to sight and memory. I knew of a man who took lodgings in one of the Portland villages with the intention of spending six weeks there. When I became aware of him he had already stayed five years. He could not tear himself away.

And yet opinions about Portland vary very much. One writer dismisses it as “a rugged barren bluff, where few would take up a residence from choice”; another terms it “a lofty and romantic isle”; and a third paints, in a few graphic sentences, “the peninsula carved by time out of a single stone; . . . for centuries immemorial the home of a curious and well-nigh distinct people, cherishing strange beliefs and singular customs; . . . overlooking the great Channel highway with all its suggestiveness, and standing out so far into mid-sea that touches of the Gulf Stream soften the air until February.”¹ The traditional scene of the first Danish invasion,—before that a Roman stronghold, a British fortress,—its history fades back into the cloudy legends of that mysterious Iberian race, probably of semi-Phœnician origin, which

¹ Hardy, ‘The Well-beloved.’

peopled in prehistoric times the coasts of the Durotriges, if not of all Britain. Camden gives the Portlanders the name of being the most famous in all England for "slinging of stones," but whether he refers to their legendary prowess as *balears* or to their strength in dealing with cyclopean blocks is a matter of absolute uncertainty. They are a magnificent race, immensely tall, lithe, and sinewy, approaching the finest classical models of beauty and strength. Huxley says that "Iberian blood is the source of the so-called black Celts in Ireland and Britain," and these islanders are dark and swarthy to a wonder. There is no race in England to compare with them, especially as regards the athletic proportions and length of limb of the young lads and growing girls, all their movements instinct with easy grace. A Portlander, every muscle trained to use by the variety and strenuousness of his many occupations, can lift without strain stones of immense weight; for the ordinary villager follows three occupations. Late at night, or very early in the morning, he dons jersey and sea-boots and goes a-fishing,—the mackerel, the *pièce de résistance* of all his meals, flashes silver in the nets; all day long, white from head to foot, he works in the quarries; at evening, clad in a hybrid mixture of his previous costumes, he tills the shallow soil.

Never intermingling or intermarrying with the mainlanders, or "Kimberlins," the island-

folk have until very recently conserved themselves as a unique and splendid people; but now the barriers are breaking down: what racial tradition, however haughty, has remained intact from the intrusive hand of the nineteenth century? Still, however, every one is every one else's cousin, and three surnames do duty for the majority of the inhabitants. If a man's name is not Attwooll, it must be Lano; and if it be neither, then it is inevitably Stone.

The first week you spend in Portland you are handicapped by that ophthalmia which attacks all new-comers, and which results from the dazzling glare of the limestone, the roads, houses, and quarries. Your eyes are glued miserably together, and all you can do is to bathe them in brandy-and-water, grope your way into the fields, and sit down in the sunshine to pray for better times and be soothed into present oblivion by the hum of the sea. One consolation is, that the ophthalmia will eventually pass away, and you will pay no further attention to the glare when you encounter it; and then you can begin to enjoy yourself.

The Isle of Portland, whose outline presents a striking similarity to that of Gibraltar, is a rocky peninsula—in stormy weather an island truly—about four and a half miles long by two miles wide, one solid lump of limestone. It is tongue-shaped—its southern point, known as the Bill, jutting into the vortex of the Race, about thirty feet above sea-level; and

its highest point, the Verne Hill, being nearly 500 feet in height. To the east side of this peninsula lie the fort, the Government quarries, and the prison; on the west the terrible West Bay or Deadman's Bay roars under the precipitous cliffs, and the Chesil Bank stretches away towards Devon. The centre and west centre of the island are occupied by the natives' quarries, and by eight little villages, trailing off into each other, so that sometimes it would be hard to say where one begins and another ends. Chesilton, Castleton, Fortune's Well, Reforme, Easton, Weston, Wakeham, and—a little way farther south across the fields—Southwell. These villages are stone from roof to threshold. Door-posts, lintels, window-frames, chimneys—nothing but slabs of stone; great stone porches, whitewashed, and containing stone seats: an edition in miniature of the giant cities of Bashan. The only hint of colour is given by the beautiful and glowing window-flowers in pots. The garden walls and field walls—there are no hedges—are of rubble, and the very meadow stiles are constructed of three upright blocks of stone. Almost every house is garnished outside by a collection of stone curiosities—huge ammonites and chunks of fossilised trees. The soil, which is extraordinarily fertile, only goes about eighteen inches deep; then the stony strata begin, bed after bed.

When you come out of Portland station, and see the sheer rock-face of the hill confronting you like a blank wall, dismay

seizes upon the unaccustomed heart; there is nothing in one's previous experience to coincide with it. "The towering rock, the houses above houses, one man's doorstep rising behind his neighbour's chimney, the gardens hung up by one edge to the sky, the vegetables growing on apparently almost vertical planes,"—all this is at first sight disconcerting and perplexing. It seems a physical impossibility to ascend otherwise than as flies might do. But carts and carriages presently appear, crawling along the skyey roadways; and the white-powdered teams of eight or ten huge horses are desried slowly descending with stone-laden trolleys; and redcoats are progressing along the road from the Verne, which is so steep that one can hardly come down it save at an undignified jog-trot. These things inspire a feeble courage, and the climb begins. It is hot, very hot work, ascending the hill, and the street glares and flares at you to warn you off. But by dogged endeavour you scale this stony rampart and gain the tableland at the top, where celestial sea-winds come to cool you, and sweetnesses of lucerne and clover are wafted over your dusty head. A glorious panorama lies before you, westward to Torbay, and eastward to the Isle of Wight, with Weymouth behind you in a twinkling haze of heat and hepatica-blue sea. With the exception of the tiny thread, the mere rib of shingle joining island to mainland, your whole horizon is bounded by the circumambient sea, lying high

up in the air, black-blue against the sky: it is like standing in the bottom of a cup (though you know you are hundreds of feet above sea-level), and looking up at its brimming edges. The sea surrounds you, visibly and audibly, booming in the distance, bellowing close at hand; the whole solid earth seems vibrant to the eternal rolling purr.

At the death of a Portland proprietor his land is—or was until recently—divided *longitudinally* amongst all his sons; so that the great unenclosed fields, termed “lawns,” which run at the back of the villages and only stop at the cliff-edge, have become gradually divided up into continually narrowing strips and stripes, many being only some six feet wide though perhaps a quarter of a mile long. The barred and striped appearance of these rippled, undulating “lawns” has a very singular and fascinating effect. A long ribbon of ripening barley may be seen huddling all its length against a strip of purple lucerne, which marches with one of pink clover: in immediate juxtaposition lie a stripe of oats aflame with scarlet poppies, a straight green bar of potato-ground, and a line of waste fallow lighted up by the vivid yellow of charlock. There are, as I have said, no hedges, or indeed any other perceptible means of dividing lawn from lawn. Another custom connected with land tenure was the sale of property by “church gift,” no sale being considered legal unless transacted with certain ceremonies in the parish church before the full congregation. (The church

of St George, in Reforne, by the way, is considered by the islanders a marvel and a masterpiece, and I was informed that it was built as an exact facsimile of St Paul's Cathedral—a resemblance not apparent to any alien eye.) At an inn in Fortune's Well they keep the “Reeve-Pole,” a sort of wooden Domesday Book, bearing a record of every estate in the island, which is still referred to as a final authority in all questions of manorial dues. Portland is a manor of the Crown. Where pasture-land occurs it is used for the grazing of the little rough sheep of the island, which indeed are not carefully shepherded but wander at will down the less precipitous cliff-sides, and browse upon the short herbage of the “weirs,” those rocky terraces and landslips which descend to the sea all along the south-east coast of Portland. It is often extremely startling to meet there, in some lonely corner, between the huge tumbled blocks of limestone fringed with hart's-tongue ferns, the sudden apparition of a scared black face or the whisk of a long shaggy tail. The only natural product of the place—omitting the stone and the mackerel—is the arum-root, which used to be dug and sold by the bushel, powdered, as “Portland arrow-root.” I have met old women in the Isle of Wight who had been in the habit of buying this commodity; but I do not think there is any trade in it now. The flora of the weirs and the southern sheep-walks is abundant, and many and gorgeous butterflies haunt there; but it lacks dis-

tion, being finer in quantity than in quality: a few rare plants exist, however, such as the pheasant's-eye (*Flos Adonis*) and Portland spurge (*Euphorbia portlandica*). The hart's-tongues are larger and more plentiful than I have ever seen elsewhere; and the sea-pink and sea-lavender blow at the brink of some ghastly fissures beyond the lower lighthouse. Samphire grows freely along the weirs, and people of all ranks gather it for pickling; wild fennel also offers itself as a natural condiment to the inveterate mackerel, boiled, broiled, baked, or "marinered," which forms one's staple dish.

Trees there are practically none, nor bushes, except a few wind-stunted thorns, and sparse roadside hedges of tea-plant and tamarisk on the southern plateau of the isle; the only trees of any size being those of Pennsylvania Castle, in Wakeham, where a wonderful leafy dingle slants to the remains of Bow-and-Arrow or Rufus' Castle, and to the ruined churchyard overhanging Church-hope Cove. Concerning Pennsylvania Castle—erected about 1800—I was told by one of the Lanos, "'Tis called after William Penn, maybe you've heard of 'en. He was a wonderful great man in old times; and he comed sailing over from Ameriky hundreds o' years ago, and he sees the Durids all sitting in a row along the tops o' the cliffs. The Durids, I daresay you've heard tell of 'en, they was priests and suchlike in old days. Well, and they all sits like this, hanging their heads down on their breasts, a-watching

him; and he thinks they must be asleep. And so he hollers out to his men, 'Wake 'em! wake 'em! I say; wake 'em!' And that's why this place is called Wakeham," she concluded with a triumphant air of irrefutability. "Durids" or none, Pennsylvania and its immediate environs constitute the loveliest scenery in the isle. Quitting the highroad as it passes the castle wall, you wind down a steep lane shadowed by massive stone walls, and presently an archway before you—the arch of an ivied bridge—frames an exquisite glimpse of sea, and the square stern tower of Bow-and-Arrow looms on the rock above you, gloomy and austere. It is probably of the period of Rufus, to whom it is ascribed, and shares, in common with every other ruined castle in the south-west of England, the repute of having been captured in 1142 by Robert, Earl of Gloucester, for the Empress Maud. There are machicolated parapets, and circular arrow-holes in the walls; the bridge connects it with the opposite cliff. Turning round the corner beneath the arch, you come upon a steep and narrow way slipping seaward under buttresses of rock; shattered tombstones are flung along the edge of the overhanging cliff; half-way down the path is an unfailing spring of clear water, and water-carriers—men, maids, children—ascending and descending twice a-day. A few steps farther and you reach the most picturesque of little coves, rock-begirt and seaweed-strewn; long ago a busy quay: there are a couple of fishermen's huts,

roofed with old boats, and a few fishing-boats and lobster-pots are drawn up on the shingle. It is practically the only landing-place on this side of the island. Into the gorgeous sea of the Wessex coast, translucent as sunlight through all its azure and purple depths, the squared slabs of milk-white rock descend like marble stairways, visible many fathoms deep: the wash and splash of the crystal-clear tide bears a burden to the crying of innumerable sea-birds. There is a vague rumour current that the isle once extended so far in a south-east direction as the sandbank called the Shambles, and that the ruined church above the cove was then its centre; but it is difficult to believe in such encroachments of the sea upon so iron a coast. From this point on the seaward face of the stone cliff is worn and hollowed into vast resonant caverns, some extending nearly half a mile under the land: lying face downwards and peering over the edge, one obtains a glimpse of their dark-green vaults and domes; at certain tides it is possible to take a boat up them. They are said to be haunted by spirits, however, and the aboriginal Portlander does not greatly care to explore them. One's foot rings hollow in treading over the thin roofs of those caverns, and in one of them, Cave's Hole, the waves have worn an outlet, whence in rough weather they spurt in foam and thunder. This hole used to be employed extensively in smuggling operations, men and goods being hauled up by

ropes out of boats in the cave below.

The sunlight and moonlight always seem brighter in a limestone country, and the colouring of the flowers more vivid. I imagine that the heat refracted from the whiteness of the soil must also draw out more potently the scents of flowers and grasses. The air of Portland is so honey-sweet, in latter summer, with the exhalations of clovers and lucernes and seeding grasses, and at the same time so pungently invigorating with the continuous salt breath of the sea, that no words can do justice to its rapturous purity. Many stories have been written which treat the island as a "ground-bass," but they never got any further than the "Grove," and the hairbreadth 'scapes of convicts rightfully or wrongfully in durance. No one has ever brought the scent of the lucerne over the printer's ink except Thomas Hardy in 'The Well-beloved,' before quoted, where it is, as Vindilia, or the "Isle of Slingers," the *locale* of an otherwise not very successful novel. The magnitude of the scene, the magnificence of the local colour, seem to have swamped the human interest; but, as nearly as may be, one is brought into touch with the unparalleled and inexplicable fascination of Portland, its lonely splendours and silences, and the old-world existence of its quarrier cottage-folk; with the elemental forces of the wind and sea, that soak into one's very being and permeate every thought.

The High and Low Light-

houses lie away to the south, overlooking the Bill. The tinkle of sheep-bells, the hoarse cries of gulls, the warbling of the skylarks, the seething churning crash of the sea surging into chasms and abysses, leaping up the clean-cut walls of rock—these are the only sounds; it is the incarnation of loneliness. Near the lower lighthouse is a little well on a hillside, framed and builded in with great white slabs. Never was anything so archaic: if a Naiad rose and beckoned, you would hardly be surprised. At night it is, paradoxically, less solitary: the world is full of lights—the steady glare of the lighthouse eyes, the twinkling beacon of the Shambles light-ship, the moving glimmers of the ships passing up and down Channel, the clear and unsurpassable brightness of the stars; and the little friendly homely lights now and then distantly visible in mullioned cottage-windows. Upon the western coast the desolation is even more unbroken. There the cliffs are higher, the signs of human habitation still less frequent, and the sinister roll and rumble of the breakers on the Chesil bank impart a certain ominous horror to the sunniest day. This extraordinary shingle-bank (the name is derived from the A.S. *cesil*, a pebble) extends eleven or twelve miles westward, its rounded sea-worn stones, which at the Portland end are very large, decreasing gradually in size as it approaches Bridport. The story goes that any smuggler landing on a dark night had only to pick up a handful of these

pebbles to ascertain (from their dimensions) the exact locality; and so varied are the stones in colour and contour that a commonsaying avouches, "Whoever finds two stones alike upon the Chesil will get £50 reward." Seldom does such a deadly coast lie in wait for the shipwrecked sailor: the name of Deadman's Bay is no idle one. The strongest swimmer wrestles in vain with the savage backwash and under-tow of the seas on the Chesil, which drag him down with the weight of the rolling shingle and the furious suction of the receding wave. Wrecks innumerable are scattered along the course of the bank. In 1795 Admiral Christian and his squadron and convoy were driven in here and lost; nearly 1000 souls perished, and the shore for seven miles was strewn with wreckage. In 1824 the Ebenezer sloop of 90 tons, laden with heavy ordnance, was carried bodily over the Chesil—which is forty feet above high-water—and deposited in the Swanery creek beyond it. The Avalanche memorial church at the little hamlet of Southwell guards the memory of another disastrous wreck of more recent years; but most of the countless minor tragedies of the Chesil have slipped from memory of man.

Portland is happy in having no history, or very little to call such; all that remains being, as one would imagine, the record of obscurely daring deeds. The castle is of the usual Henry VIII. blockhouse type, so familiar to dwellers in the south-western coasts. It

was garrisoned in 1588, in expectation of a landing from the Armada; but all that the Armada did was to lose two treasure-galleons in Deadman's Bay, from which silver ingots and antique rings are still washed up after storms. In 1643 the castle was captured by the Roundheads under Sir Edward Hungerford, and used as a depository for the plunder of Wardour Castle. It was, however, retrieved by a gallant stratagem of the Royalists. Sixty horsemen with the Parliamentary colours galloped up wildly to the gates as though pursued by the troops of Lord Carnarvon, who was, in fact, close at their heels, and so gained entrance. The garrison was overpowered and surprised into surrender. There are some interesting portraits here by Lely and Mytens; curious prints of the Field of the Cloth of Gold, and the Coronation of Edward VI.; and a quaint inscription in the hall — "God save Kinge Henri the VIII. of that name, and prins Edwarde begottin of Queene Jane, my ladi Mari that godli virgin, and the ladi Elizabith so towardli, with the Kinges honourable counselors." Many Roman, British, and pre-British remains have been and are still discovered. Aubrey alludes to the existence in his day of "a double-workt campe, British," and this was still to be seen so recently as 1849 on the west slope of the Verne Hill: it had a double rampart with corresponding fosses. At the top of the Roman road which leads up the steep escarpments of the isle, tradition

has planted a temple of the Roman Venus; which is the more probable, in that, were the mysterious race of Slingers indeed of Phœnician descent, the sea-born Ashtaroth, the Phœnician Aphrodite, would have been their principal deity, and the site of her fane would naturally have been adopted for that of her Roman congener. On the south-east and south-west coasts there were within living memory the remains of ancient embankments extending along the verge of the cliff, which bore evidence of a far greater antiquity than that of the camp. Treasure-trove of many species—cists, sarcophagi, skeletons, deer-horns, fibulæ, funeral urns, gold Gaulish coins, red Samian pottery, bronze spear-heads, &c.—is frequently unearthed, to the enrichment of various private and public collections. Near the Bill, I have heard, are still discernible the remains of the "raised beaches"; but of these I have never obtained any explanation or identification, well as I knew almost every foot of that neighbourhood. Perhaps they were pre-historic wharves or quays of hewn stone. Remarkable subterranean dwellings have been found in quarrying, about twelve inches below the soil, veritable stone bee-hives about eight feet high—their only aperture a sixteen-inch hole in the rounded roof, closed at will by a stone slab—and containing sling-stones, bones of animals, and other evidences of habitation. To the geologist Portland presents a special field of study in itself,

which space forbids any attempt to discuss here.

Meanwhile no word has been said of the quarries, which in most people's minds share with the "Grove" the distinction of being the sole *raison d'être* of Portland. The metallic clang-clank, tink-tank, of chisel and hammer and stone-saw, the huge angular movements of cranes and derricks, the blazing white dust that covers and encompasses all things,—among these you will see many unusual and interesting sights, you will court a probable attack of ophthalmia, and acquire with certainty a colossal headache. There are about a hundred quarries in Portland (not counting the Government ones where convict labour is employed), from which some fifty to sixty thousand tons of stone are annually raised. These quarries have each its distinctive name, —King Barrow, Red Croft, Verne Street, &c.,—and they are mainly the property of native owners. To clear an acre of the surface soil, removing it in barrows, takes three years. The next strata, which are of no commercial value, are broken up by picks and wedges, and then flung into the sea or piled in mounded heaps. The "roach" bed is then reached, which is blasted up into blocks of thirty to fifty tons weight: these are raised by screw-jacks and winches, hewn, measured, weighted, marked, and taken down to the shore for exportation. Purbeck marble was widely employed long before the valuable oolites of Portland had attained

any more than a local celebrity. The first architect of note who used them was Inigo Jones, in building Whitehall; but they were not in anything like general request until after the Great Fire of London, when Wren imported them largely for St Paul's Cathedral and other City churches. The quarries from which Wren drew his stone were in the north of the isle, and have long been abandoned in favour of others where the stone is more ductile and workable. All the world now knows Portland stone; and the very finest, taken from what is locally termed the "whit" or "best" bed, is one of our most valuable building materials, being of regular texture, even colour, and at once free-working and durable. The "roach" bed above mentioned—these two are the only strata exported—is also of great strength and durability, but marred by occasional cavities containing casts of shells.

The quarries are the wealth and fame of Portland; and yet it is not by these, any more than by the prison or the forts, that one would most willingly remember it. Rather, one's mind reverts to the silence of the fern-hung weirs, the sweetness of the striped lawns, the lark's song above the warm windy sheep-walks; to the majesty of cliff and sky, before which all lesser thoughts dwindle into tawdry insignificance; and the eternal, all-penetrating, all-impregnating sight and sound and odour of the sea.

MAY BYRON.

SPECULATING ON A DOUBLE EVENT.

MY man Alfred — “Muster Al-freed,” as the villagers call him — has always passed as a gentleman in our parish, where, as I am informed on credible authority, the title appertains to all men who pay twenty shillings in the pound. For all that I know to the contrary, the great Alfred may pay as much as twenty-one shillings in the pound, and by rights he certainly ought to do this. For although I have been in the habit of paying the ordinary twenty shillings in the pound myself, seldom — except, indeed, when some indigent neighbour comes to beg the loan of a couple of shillings — have I heard myself honoured by having a “Muster” prefixed to my name; while I happen to know that Alfred is commonly known in the neighbourhood as “Muster Al-freed, him as mucks out young George’s sties.” It is mortifying to one’s vanity, when one comes to think about it, to find oneself placed on a lower level than that oily scoundrel Pecksniff. For if Tom Pinch was, like Alfred, spoken of as “Mr Pinch,” his employer did, at all events, enjoy a similar distinction, the toll-keeper — doubtless an authority on etiquette — pointedly alluding to Tom as “Mr Pinch, Mr Pecksniff’s young man.”

However, I am well content to let the omission pass, reflecting that neither do hard words break nor soft expressions mend any bones, and

wholly disclaiming any desire to enjoy the title of “Muster,” if the possession thereof entails the duty of “mucking out sties,” whether my own or any other man’s.

Besides, I must remember that Muster Al-freed sings in the choir, and I am only a humble member of the congregation, though I may state that, so far as I am qualified to be a judge, the service has been known to go passably well even on occasions when Alfred has taken a Sunday off. Our highly respected choir-leader, with whom I fell into conversation the other day, was pleased to deliver himself as follows:—

“Well, it’s just this way along of Muster Al-freed—you may gie he a note as often as you likes, but it’s please God and the weather whether ’un takes ’un.”

And from this I opine that Alfred is hardly as yet qualified to take the place of the late lamented Mr Sims Reeves, though I have it on the best authority that the former so far aspires to follow in the footsteps of the latter as to call himself a tenor.

Chary of words from the first day that I knew him has been the great Alfred, nor can he be said to have been at any time found guilty of the “extravagance of euphuism,” his forms of expression savouring rather of the bucolic, not to say the vulgar.

My friend and neighbour Johnson, a much-respected J.P. and a mighty sportsman, a gentleman, moreover, not altogether devoid of dry humour, now and again alludes to Alfred as "that singularly suave and well-mannered individual who accused me of having stolen your gun."

The circumstances were these. At the conclusion of a day's sport in Johnson's coverts I had bicycled home in the dark, and had left my gun to be called for at a convenient season. A few days later I was asked at very short notice to shoot elsewhere, and in an evil moment sent off Alfred to reclaim my property.

"Best drive over in the muck-cart, beant I?" he inquired on receiving the order.

Why he should invariably have elected to give such a noisome title to the small market-cart, which has never been employed for the purpose implied, has always passed my comprehension. Probably it was a case of the sneezing baby in 'Wonderland'—

"He always does it to annoy,
Because he knows it teases."

But I had no time to argue the point.

"You can go any way you like, Alfred," I said, "as long as you bring the gun," and with that I went off to my breakfast.

Straight up to Johnson's front door in the aforesaid market-cart drove Alfred, smoking a black clay pipe, and arrayed in his workaday

clothes, which were not of a high order of merit.

As luck would have it, Johnson himself, having just finished his breakfast, was standing in the porch filling a pipe and speculating on the weather. Not a little surprised by the sudden apparition, he stared at Alfred, who stared back hard in return and presently inaugurated a conversation.

"I say," in his gruffest tones, "is this Johnson's shop?"

"Well, yes, I suppose it is," replied the master of the house.

"Oh!" another stare, and then, "Are you Johnson?"

"Well, yes, I generally answer to that name.

"Then you've got young George's gun, and he wants it. Give it up, I say."

Johnson gave it up accordingly, and has never since that day let slip an opportunity of roasting me over the matter.

Such being Alfred's manners to the world at large, it may be reckoned on the side of good fortune to myself that throughout a period of some seven years, during which I have enjoyed the pleasure of his intimate acquaintance and he has graciously condescended to draw good wages for a minimum of work, he has on the whole been decently civil to me. Obsequious, affable, or even to the smallest degree gracious, I can truthfully say that I never found him. But he has been kind enough to pass the time of day to me when he has met me in the garden,—his garden, as he elects to call it,—to accept his wages without protest, and occasionally to take me into

his confidence on the subject of "coming events," either in his own domestic circle or my pig-yard. On the whole, I am inclined to believe that the increase of the yard population used to gratify Alfred more than an addition to his own family; for whereas the latter event implied an extra mouth to feed, in the former case there was a prospect of roast-pig in the distance. And I fear me that Alfred's taste was better adapted to appreciate his share of the gallon of old ale, supplied from the village public for my old sow's lying-in, than a husband's portion of the bottle of port wine which I was in the habit of sending to Mrs Alfred when she was approaching the stage of convalescence after her annual effort of maternity. I sometimes used to wonder whether, if Mrs A. had felt it incumbent upon herself to present her lord and master with twins, he would have offered to present me with the extra little stranger by way of compensation for the two piglings which for a period of seven years annually found their way from my yard to his family circle. That the happy father would have stood out for an extra bottle of port, no one acquainted with the searchings of friend Alfred's heart would ever have entertained a momentary doubt. As things went, the one bottle, like the two little pigs, came to be regarded by him as a perquisite, —a matter, therefore, of right rather than of gratitude.

"The missis have had another little 'un a week back,"

he would say, apropos of nothing; "so as I'll want another drop of that there port," and there—that is, with the presentation of the bottle—the matter ended so far as I was concerned. In taking possession of the half-yearly pig, on the other hand, Alfred posed as a benefactor to society at large, which expression must be taken to include the old sow and myself. There again, perhaps, I ought to have deemed myself lucky not to have been called upon to pay for the creature's board and lodging.

"Pore little critter!" Alfred would say as he stowed the little beast away under his coat, "he shall come along 'ome wi' me. I knows as there ain't no room for he here, and old Bess she'll be glad to be shot on it."

Sufficient, perhaps, has been said to show that, taking all things into consideration, great Muster Al-freed was at least as civil to myself as he was to his casual acquaintance, as I may term my friend Johnson. And so in course of time I learnt to forget to be annoyed when village gossip in my hearing alluded to my hired servant as "Muster Al-freed as works along o' young George."

But—it sounds a little incongruous, I will admit, to connect a national crisis with my own very petty affairs—the late dissolution of Parliament produced a material change in the relations between master and servant; for the exigencies of a contested election brought to our quiet village a Radical emissary of the very worst type,

who preached socialistic doctrine in the corners of our streets, and discoursed by the hour in our public-houses on the dependence of Capital upon Labour. And although, when the poll was eventually declared, our Conservative candidate was first and the Radical interloper nowhere, I was shortly given to understand that my man Alfred had become a dabbler in those troubled waters of politics wherein the unwary mariner is liable to be shipwrecked. Civility, or at any rate that form of civility which finds an outlet in gracious speech, has, alas! for many a long year been a dear commodity in our part of the world, and, as I have said already, it could never be laid to Alfred's charge that he accepted either weekly wage or yearly donation of pigs and port wine with either show of gratitude or word of thanks. Having fully developed that bump of acquisitiveness which, in his time of tribulation, marked Dickens's famed Father of the Marshalsea, Alfred wholly lacked the graceful magnanimity which enabled Mr William Dorritt to receive the proffered "testimonials" of visitors and fellow-collegians as tribute due indeed to superior genius, but yet to be accepted with a show of courtesy.

"Your wages, Alfred," I used to say as cheerily as I could.

"Ah, wages be 'un — yes, that's them," and he would pocket the money and go on with his work unconcernedly.

But in the weeks that followed the visit of the Apostle

of Socialism to our village, the wages were accepted either aggressively, suspiciously, or contemptuously, and—for inspired, doubtless, by the teacher's example, the thick-witted disciple had waxed more loquacious than of yore—I was even favoured with a little gratuitous examination in arithmetic.

"Wage-day, Alfred, isn't it?"

"No one never said as it weren't."

"Well, here you are, then," and I tendered him the amount—five-and-twenty shillings. Alfred would take the coins and turn them over contemptively in his hand.

"What do yer make on it?" would come the inquiry.

"What it is, five-and-twenty shillings."

"Five-and-twenty bob yer calls it, do yer?"

"You had better count it and see."

"Well, that's an arf-suvrin, ain't it?" and he put the coin aside.

I assented to the proposition.

"Well, arf a suvrin's the same as ten bob, ain't it?"

"Yes."

"Well, and them there's four arf-crown pieces?"

I nodded.

"Well, then, that's ten bob too, ain't it?"

"Yes."

"Well, then, ten bob and ten bob makes twenty bob, and that's the same as a suvrin, ain't it?"

Again I felt bound to assent.

"Well, and then there's five bob?"

"Yes, and that makes twenty-five."

"And whoever said as it didn't?"

As I showed no inclination to discuss abstruse problems, Alfred duly pocketed the coins, and my time being on the whole as valuable as Alfred's—which, by the way, is, or used to be, my time too—I started to move off.

"I say," shouted Alfred just as I was getting out of earshot.

"Well, what's the matter?"

"There ain't nothing the matter as I knows on, but I say——"

"Well?"

"There's my wife's brother, he has twenty-eight bob a-week for just a-driving of a milk-cart along a road—none of your digging and sweating, mark yer."

Having no particular desire either to prolong the conversation or to stand in the way of Alfred's preferment, I told my friend very shortly that if he saw his way towards earning twenty-eight shillings a-week in the same line as his brother-in-law, he was quite welcome to try. But receiving no further reply to the suggestion than such as may be implied by a vigorous scratching of the head, I presently went back to my own work.

This sort of thing went on for a month or more, a fresh relation or connection of Alfred's being cited each week by way of bringing home to my doubting mind the fact that I was a stingy beast and Alfred an underpaid angel; but, like the Egyptian of old, I hardened my heart and declined to look at the matter from the proper point of view.

While I was yet in doubt whether it would not be wiser policy to harden my heart even further and inform Alfred that I would in future dispense with the services of a habitual grumbler, matters came suddenly to a climax of their own accord.

Finding that a small lawn had been very carelessly mown, I told my friend that he had better run the machine over it again, whereupon he suddenly burst out with the following announcement:—

"I dunno whether you knows it, mate, but it's the likes of me as keeps the likes of you."

Wholly apart from my knowledge that our Radical visitor had talked a lot of nonsense in the village, the very form of the remark would have at once suggested to my mind that Alfred had been "got at"; for in addition to the fact that it would be wholly beside the mark to give him credit for any originality, Alfred is not in the habit of putting his propositions into a categorical form, but is rather inclined to favour a hypothetical style of conversation, and to inform me as to his intentions with a note of interrogation at the end of each sentence.

"Who has been putting that idea into your head, Alfred?" I inquired.

"Whoever said as any one had been putting of anything into my head? Leastways I don't want none of your putting. That what I said were there afore, and what I says now, and holds to, is that it's the likes of me as keeps the likes of you."

"Then perhaps the likes of you will be kind enough to mow

that lawn again," I answered, feeling wholly disinclined to argue on abstract questions. But Alfred—the weather, to be sure, was somewhat sultry—was far more ready to talk out time than to work, so he repeated his remark.

"Didn't I say as how it were the likes of me as keeps the likes of you?"

I admitted that he had said something of the sort.

"There, then," triumphantly, "I aren't a going to pull my inside out with that there machine no longer"; and having thus delivered himself, Alfred thrust his hands into his pockets, kicked the machine by way of showing his contempt for my property, and began to whistle.

This was altogether too much of a good thing. Having already put up with a great deal of nonsense, I saw that it was high time to put my foot down.

"Look you here, Alfred," I said very deliberately, "you either mow that lawn before you go to your dinner, or go straight off the place."

"Not if I knows it, young man; leastways not wi'out my fortnight's wages or my fortnight's notice."

"If you don't do the work you are set to do, you'll get neither wages nor notice, my friend. You will go off the place straight, and you can whistle for your wages."

At the moment that I spoke the words the latter was exactly what Alfred was doing; but he was so much taken aback by my announcement that he stopped whistling on the moment and resorted to the more familiar

occupation of scratching his head. Later in the day I discovered that, having probably taken some crony's advice on the matter, he had killed two birds at one stone, having mown the lawn and broken the machine.

"Runned her over a stone, I reckons," he remarked by way of apology; but I could see that he was not a little disappointed when I failed to show any trace of annoyance over what I shrewdly suspected to be a wanton piece of mischief.

It was unfortunate for Alfred that my strong belief that he had invited counsel as to the wisest and at the same time the most aggravating course to be pursued under the circumstances should have been almost immediately verified; for late in the day I chanced to encounter our sexton, Job Billing, in an extremely communicative humour. The great Job when sober is apt to be at once cynical and malicious; when half-seas over, his desire to be malicious overshadows his discretion. I had no particular desire to enter into conversation with a man who was evidently the worse for liquor, but the circumstance that he was blocking the gateway through which I wished to pass gave me no option in the matter.

"Evening, guv'nor," he remarked. "How's yourself?" and before I had time to answer the inquiry, "and how's Alfred, and the old mowing-machine and all?"

"We're all very well, thank you."

"What, ain't he broke it

arter all? Why, says I to him when he come to me, 'Just you go back, Al-freed,' says I, 'and you mow his blooming bit of grass, and you set to and break his blooming engine, and then if he up and says anything, why, just you call him all the names as you can think on, and you give him the sack and all. That there young George,' says I to him, 'he ain't no manner of good'; then suddenly changing his tone, he inquired, "What, and ain't he give you the sack neither?"

I shook my head.

"Well, then, he's agoing to gi'e it you come Friday certain sure. You up and give it him, lad; sarve him right, I say. He ain't no blooming good of, ain't Alfred, nor you neither," and having fired this parting shot Job lurched off homewards.

"Timeo Danaos et dona ferentes."

Now and again, though, when the *gifts* take the form of gratuitous advice offered by the plaintiff's attorney, more especially when the latter is in that stage of intoxication which produces plain truths, it is well to remember the fate of Laocoön.

Alfred's face, when on the following Friday I paid him his wages and at the same time gave him a fortnight's warning, was a perfect study. That the worm would turn and the employer voluntarily deprive himself of the services of his labourer was a contingency for which the treacherous rabbi had never prepared his thick-witted disciple. Besides, he had intended to give the warning himself and

at his own convenience, and to be forestalled, whether in the betting-ring, on the Stock Exchange, or in other walks of life, is deeply mortifying.

On the Saturday, having doubtless in the interim taken counsel of Job Billing, he did rather more work than usual, and, stopping me as I passed him in the course of the afternoon, propounded a new theory.

"I say," very gruffly, "didn't it ought to have been a month by rights?"

"Oughtn't what to be a month?"

"Why, that notice as you give me."

"As a matter of fact, Alfred,"

I replied, "I don't think you are entitled to have more than a week's notice, but if you want a month you can have it."

"Well, I reckons it oughter to be a month just to get things straight like," and at a month we left it.

As there is plenty of work going in our parish at the back end of the summer, it occurred to me that Alfred had rather missed an opportunity of asserting the independence of the labourer by holding out for longer notice instead of leaving me at the end of a week, but I was shortly to discover that there were very material considerations in favour of delay.

At the expiration of the third week from the day when I had given him notice he was pleased to inform me, when he came for his wages, that he had had an addition to his family.

"And there were that little

drop o' port wine as the missis were a-counting on."

Although I did not exactly grudge the bottle of wine which he carried off in his pocket, it did occur to me that Mrs Alfred had timed the event remarkably well. But when, two or three days later, a second announcement—viz., that my sow had also done her duty by society—followed suit, I was no longer at a loss for a reason why Alfred had held out for a month's warning, and at once made up my mind that the extra pigling—real or imaginary—should be left to the tender mercies of its natural parent.

"How many did you say there were?" I inquired.

"Leven—one more nor she can do wi': not as I don't think as she'd rear nine better nor ten; she's none so young as she were."

"Oh, I think we'll chance that, Alfred, thank you. If the old sow can't manage the lot we'll have one reared in the house."

"What!" exclaimed the prospective pig-farmer; "bean't I to take the pore little critter home along o' me?"

"Certainly not."

"Not," with rising indignation, "when my missis were a-counting on it to rear along o' her little 'un?"

"Your wife will have to learn not to count her pigs or her chickens before they're hatched, my good man. The pig will stay where it is."

If Master Alfred had no answer ready on the spur of the moment, a confabulation with

Job Billing furnished him with what, doubtless, to the *par nobile fratrum* seemed a choice remark by way of leave-taking.

"I bean't agoing to trouble you to give me no character," he was pleased to say.

"You can please yourself about that, Alfred."

"Well, it ain't the same as if it were a gemman's place, is it?"

"Certainly not," I answered readily, and once again Alfred looked disappointed.

My present gardener comes from the banks of the Tweed, and the only cause of complaint that I have against him is that he will persist in speaking of my rather natty lodge as the "bothy." Nor do I think that he is entirely sympathetic with my sow, which rather annoys than pleases him by occasionally producing a family. He is a reticent and austere man, doing a good day's work himself and exacting the same to the uttermost ounce from odd-job labourers.

I am sorry for Alfred when I meet him in the winter months out of elbows and generally dejected, though I know that he earns good wages in the summer. But most of all do I pity him when, having induced my Scotsman to give him a week's work, I watch the pair digging side by side in my potato-ground; for then I know that in toil and tribulation, and by the sweat of his brow, Alfred is earning three shillings a-day, and that no pleasing prospect of roast-pork or port wine to come is softening his hard lot.

MUSINGS WITHOUT METHOD.

THE WORSHIP OF SPEED—THE UNIVERSAL PASSION OF RACING—THE CONSEQUENT DECAY OF SPORT—PACE WITHOUT MUSCLE—THE DEVELOPMENT OF CRICKET—THE HUSTLER IN LITERATURE—THE VANDAL AT WORK—MARBLE HILL AND HOGARTH HOUSE—‘BUSH-WHACKING.’

THE mad race recently run across Europe in automobiles illustrated, with a naked candour, the new worship of speed. From Paris to Berlin panted a mob of mechanical enthusiasts, who cared neither for human life nor human comfort so long as they cut a record on the highway. Here a child was killed, there an aged couple was disabled, and a sentimental press made light of these accidents because it believes that the salvation of man lies in haste. Seventy-five miles an hour on the open road! How glorious an achievement! Is not that country happy which can produce a citizen hardy enough to stand the dust and the racket of seventy-five miles in sixty minutes? Thus all the resources of modern science are recklessly devoted to the increase of pace. Oil, steam, electricity, — all play their part in the hideous drama of scurry. Here is a road, says the amateur; let us cover as much of it as we can in the shortest possible time. We shall stifle our fellow-creatures with smoke and smell, we shall deafen them with the clatter of wheels and the roar of machinery; but we shall shake off the offending miles, and in the process we shall satisfy the demands of morality, politics, and sport.

So the amateur starts out

from London, which he has no desire to leave, and dines at York, which he has no reason to visit, that he may not fall below the new standard. And the journals, which are only too sure an index of popular feeling, prophesy the downfall of England, because the French packet went from Calais to Dover in one minute less time than our packet took to cross from Dover to Calais. And the world is racing, racing on all sides and in all vehicles. The express trains race to Scotland; the 'buses and trams race in the public street. That the mob may be hurled with a greater vehemence from one place to another, the ingenuity of America is permitted to riddle the subsoil of London with burrows called tubes, wherein adventurers run about like rabbits in a sand-hill. Nor is speed of transit the only speed sanctified by popular enthusiasm. Whatever is made must be made against time, and if it would completely suit the prevailing taste it must wear out as quickly as it has been made. Not long since the reproach was thrown in the teeth of the English that they built their bridges for eternity. Did one ever hear so reckless a waste of time and trouble? Why, the American

will build you a bridge in a week, warranted not to last, a bridge which will be comfortably worn out before a new trick of architecture sends it out of date. And if it does let down a train, that does not matter: it is all good for the trade of the hustler, and a hundred souls may perchance be sent the quicker to another world.

But though the passion of speed appear dominating and universal, it has no touch with reason or intelligence. That pace is more precious than elegance, for instance, is a mere axiom; and it would be just as sensible to argue that a laggard life is the best life of all. Of course the economist will tell you that time is money. And maybe time *is* money in the kingdom of economy; but happily there is a realm not yet befogged by the dull science, and it is precisely in this realm—of sport and art—that the love of speed most fiercely intrudes itself. In the old days, when horses were not doped and cricketers worked for something else than averages, sport was the leisurely and gracious occupation of gentlemen. Those who engaged in horse-racing, rowing, or cricket desired to win; but they desired to win within certain limits. Form controlled their actions as sternly as the hope of success. To snatch a victory by a trick or a new method could never have occurred to the best sportsmen of a century ago. They respected their game with an old-fashioned loyalty which to-

day would excite an empty laugh. Their horses were trained to win by the strength and speed that were natural to them. They were ridden not by monkeys, but by horsemen, who need not have shrank from a comparison with the heroes of the Elgin marbles. And while a race afforded the world a noble spectacle, it ensured for the future a swift and sturdy strain. The race-horses of the whole world are English in blood. They are descended, one and all, from the great sires which have made our English turf famous; and they are thus descended because their sires, being wisely trained, ran in accordance with a wise tradition. The horses of to-day may be swifter over a single course; their times may appear better than the times of Eclipse and Flying Dutchman, when marked off by a modern stop-watch. But, as an expert has lately told us, they are trained merely for speed. They can last neither in distance nor in time. Short races and selling handicaps have left their mark upon them. Some can stay a mile, others discern their limit in five or six furlongs, and it is not likely that such animals as these, trained to acquire speed without bone or muscle, will hand on the ancient blood unimpaired. But as though the modern practices of the turf—the short race and the gate-money course—were not enough to ruin an ancient institution, the American trainer and the American jockey have come over to confound our confusion.

Now the Americans, in their worship of speed and their conviction that youth is better than maturity, are determined to get as much out of their horses as is possible in the shortest time. So they train them for an instant success, as the purveyor of goose-liver crams his birds, or the head-master of an English school trains his prize-boys for a scholarship. What becomes of them after the race matters little enough, and a drug or a drink may perhaps knock a pound off the weight they carry. And then, that every advantage may be caught, the jockey deserts the saddle, and perched up between the horse's ears, his back bent like the back of a cycling scorcher, he avoids the wind while he sacrifices control of his horse. If the horse stumbles and breaks his leg, as did Holocaust, so much the worse for the insurance office; if it cannon wildly into its competitors, so much the worse for the offending jockey. But in any case, the elegance of the ancient horsemanship is gone, and the tradition of more than two centuries is shattered.

For, though it sounds a paradox, speed is not the sole aim even of horse-racing. And if the newest practices triumph it would be kinder and better to convert the horse into a machine. Fill his skin with steam or electricity, and let him run about the race-course as the "sportsmen" recently ran from Paris to Berlin. Then we may encourage modern industry; and if the horse survives

only in collections with zebras and wild asses, at least no disrespect will be paid to the deity of pace. But the other sports have suffered with horse-racing from the like madness of records and averages. Once upon a time cricket was a game in which the best side had a fair chance of winning. When All-England met Hambledon upon Broad Halfpenny they generally played to a finish, since the bat and the ball were equal adversaries. To-day cricket has fallen a victim to its own perfection. The old grounds were cricket-grounds, not billiard-tables, and the wickets were pitched by the bowlers themselves. "The chief art," said Nyren, "is to select a situation that will suit your own style of bowling, and at the same time prove disadvantageous to your adversaries: as these two points, however, can rarely be accomplished, you can at all events pitch the wickets in such a manner as to benefit yourself." So, we are told, the famous Lumpy would select a point "where the ball was likely to shoot, that is, over the brow of a little hill," while Harris, considering the main chance of the game, would choose "a rising ground to pitch the ball against." Nowadays, neither Lumpy nor Harris would have the privilege of choice. The pitch is found for the bowlers, with neither hill nor rising ground, with neither weed nor tussock, and the necessity of resource is infinitely lessened. However skilful the bowler may be, the batsman is ready for him, be-

cause he knows that the accuracy of the pitch makes unexpected tricks impossible. Again, the form of the game has completely changed with time. Once it was regarded as a cardinal sin to pull a ball across the wicket, or to treat a straight ball with contempt; but perpetual bowling to the off justified the pull, and no modern cricketer would obey the canons of sixty years ago. The old batsman rather lost his wicket than made a bad or inelegant stroke. The modern batsman keeps his eye on the scoring-tent, and is satisfied if only he place the ball in a safe corner. The complaint that cricket decays as players become more expert, is no new one. When in the thirties "the innovation of throwing instead of bowling balls" was rightly called modern, the same arguments were used by the players of those days as are used by those who to-day would devise a new weapon against the batsman. "Throwing" or round-arm bowling was supported "because it tended to shorten the game," but old Nyren raised an eloquent voice against the practice. He thought that the new style of bowling would kill "the fine style of hitting." "It is not the least important objection," he wrote, "I have to offer against the system, that it reduces the strikers too much to an equality, since the indifferent batsman possesses as fair a chance of success as the most refined player; and the reason of this is obvious, because from the random man-

ner of delivering the ball it is impossible for the fine batsman to have time for that finesse and delicate management which so peculiarly distinguished the elegant manœuvring of the chief players who occupied the field about eight, ten, and more years ago." There is much wisdom in these words of old Nyren's. For a while, no doubt, cricket became, as he said it would become, a sort of horse-play. The "finesse and delicate management," whose decay drove Lord Frederick Beauclerk from the cricket-field, were practised by too few artists. Style surrendered to practical run-getting. The strikers were reduced to a sort of equality, though, from the scorer's point of view, the levelling was rather up than down. But what Nyren could not foresee was that the game was to be remade by a man of genius. In his general protest against innovation he showed his admirable sense; his precise conclusion was inadequate, because he could not know the change which presently overtook the game. In other words, W. G. Grace proved himself above and beyond all prophecies. He transformed the game, and by his own excellence he spoilt it. No method of play came amiss to him; he conquered every sort of bowling; he made every stroke his own. Back or forward was the same to his genius; he hit as easily to the off as on the leg side. He cannot be said to have had a favourite stroke, because all strokes were equal favourites.

But while he showed what he could achieve by the confident simplicity of a monumental style, he unwittingly helped to ruin the game, of which he will always remain the finest exponent. He sowed the seed, and many may now gather the fruit. In other words, he displayed the possibilities of the batsman's art; and while his rivals still fall short of his execution, the most careless of them have profited by his manifold inventions. Worse still, he has become as a standard, or bogey, unto all men. To beat his records is the end of every cricketer's desire, and so the aim of cricket—which is to beat the other side—is forgotten in the ambition of this or that batsman to increase his average, or to surpass somebody else's achievement. The rivalry of elevens is shifted from the whole to its parts, and the ingenuity of all the captains and all the M.C.C. is insufficient to restore the equal balance of the game.

Thus the harmony of cricket, as of other games, is marred by a note of professionalism—of that professionalism which encourages whatever is excessive, and would sacrifice the best interests of the sport for an increased record. The ancient forms are forgotten; the quiet pedantry which would lose a run rather than violate a canon of style is despised. And cricket is none the better for this lawlessness. Three days are now insufficient to finish a game, and if some device be not found to infuse a spirit of sportsmanship into what after all is a

pastime, our batsmen will do their turns, like the artistes of the music halls, irrespective of their opponents or of one another. But nowhere has "professionalism," in its love of excess and its contempt of "form," been further carried than on the river. The American eight, which, happily for the future of rowing, lost the Grand Challenge at Henley, brilliantly illustrates the vice of professionalism. The mystery of the training, the isolation of the oarsmen, appear an unnecessary pose. But when we hear of a race rowed in a paper-boat, with a bucketing stroke, and directed by a coxswain upon whose luckless mouth is strapped a megaphone, we may well wonder why all this mechanical cleverness is thrown away. Artifice so ingenious should surely be spent upon the all-conquering autocar. Happily the Americans were beaten. But had victory been theirs, they would not have shown sufficient cause for the destruction of an elegant sport. In rowing, as in horse-racing, too much may be paid for mere speed. The even swing of the bodies, the long sweep of the oars, which distinguish our English style of rowing, achieve more than the winning of the race: they afford to the world an admirable spectacle of harmonised force, and they give to the oarsmen the best chance, of muscular exercise. So long, then, as sport is practised for its own sake, sportsmen will attempt to win without violating their own pleasure and their own pride. But when once row-

ing becomes a method of displaying a national superiority, then the coxswain will tie a megaphone round his neck, and there seems no reason why twin-screws should not be slipped under the paper-rudder. The speed of the boat would undoubtedly be increased, and if it be sport to sit upon a petroleum engine, it must also be sport to dash up or down the river on a penny-steamboat.

However, the world is nowadays so frankly enamoured of pace that nothing is done for its own sake. The same hustling, which would abolish sport, will, if it be not foiled, abolish literature also. Time was when a man, having something to say, wrote a book; and having written a book, gave it to a publisher to publish. The publisher announced the book in such terms and in such a place as became the dignity of letters, and if the book were worthy it went down the years respected and not forgotten. Even the hack hoped with a vague optimism that, like the despised British engineer, he built for eternity, and there was nothing in the relations of author and publisher that was not pleasant and dignified. But in the hurry to heap up dollars, we are told, these old and pleasant relations have been disturbed. The last thing which the modern publisher wants, if he be a hustler, is a book. A knowledge of advertising, an army of sandwich-men, space on the hoardings, and an influence with the managers of dry-goods stores—these, we are told, are in-

dispensable to a literary success. The book itself matters nothing. It is composed to last for an hour. "The book of the hour"—that is its proud title, and in the afternoon another sample takes its place. The author who produces assumes but a small share of the responsibility. "In at least one case," we are told by a trustworthy witness, "a most successful novel was written deliberately according to a recipe supplied by the publisher, who gave the author definite instructions as to the period, the plot, and the characters, and had the manuscript considerably doctored to suit the taste of the public before he issued it. The book was simply rammed down the throat of the American public." It would be difficult to excel the simple eloquence of that pronouncement. The public no longer chooses what it wishes to read; it merely takes what is rammed down its throat, and is content, because it believes that the ramming process is culture. But in this race England of course lags behind. The Publishers' and Booksellers' Association, doubtless an effete conspiracy, objects to the classification of books as "dry goods"—a prejudice as idle and obstinate as the above-mentioned prejudice, which persuades the engineer to build a bridge that will not crack beneath the first truck which crosses it. And yet, though the English publisher has not yet learnt the art of cramming the public throat, not a little adroit advertisement may be noticed even in our own laggard

country. There are certain trade journals which devote themselves to the uncovering of "home life," which print cheap photographs of popular "authors," and which do their best to confuse the writer with the mountebank. These would not shame the enterprise of the firms which patronise the dry-goods store, and they have a subtle method of advertising their favourite wares which is beyond praise. They tabulate the newer books according to the number of copies which have been sold of each in our more earnest provinces. One week we are told that Birmingham "uses"—we cannot say "reads"—more of Corelli than of Le Gallienne; another week we hear that a thousand cakes—we beg pardon, "copies"—of Hocking have been consumed in Manchester. Instantly the rival seats of culture—Salford, Leeds, and the rest—pounce upon Le Gallienne or Hocking, as the case may be, and use no other until the taste of the Midlands begins to change. It is all very droll, and it has nothing to do with literature, but it is the fashion of the hour to confuse terms, and professing one trade, to pursue another.

And now a worse calamity befalls us. It was the custom of our ancestors to build after the manner of the British engineers, and their houses have often survived the assaults of time and chance. Now this durability does not please the evangelists of pace. What right, they ask, have houses or gardens to outstay their wel-

come. They have served their term, and it is high time they were shovelled away to make room for smart little villas crammed with telephones and electric bells. So the Vandal goes forth determined upon the extinction of beauty. Nor is he the product of modern times. He has been always with us, and the architectural history of England, as of most other countries, is a history of wanton ruin. Sometimes the Vandal has destroyed what never can be replaced, because a pedantry of taste persuaded him to believe that there was only one style permissible—the Italian. Thus Bentley would have destroyed his college of Trinity because he saw in it a damnable Gothicism, and a squalid corner of the Great Court remains to show all men what he would have accomplished had his power kept pace with his ambition. In the eighteenth century, indeed, many a fine building fell before this rage of Classic taste; yet for the eighteenth century it may be said that its taste was Classic, and that it generally builded with dignity when it destroyed. To our own time no such compliment may be paid. The architecture of modern England is oddly suited. It buys its windows in Italy, its round towers in France, its tiles in Lambeth, and its decorations everywhere. So that when it dares to destroy it has nothing but a vile medley wherewith to cover the desert ground. Moreover, our architects have too often shown so keen a desire for a job that they have condemned

as unsafe walls which, having stood the storms of centuries, were prepared to endure the centuries yet unborn. Thus, while history has been violated, associations have been contemned for the profit of the architect and the glory of the millionaire.

And the law affords no protection to ancient buildings. You may not kill a man, but you murder a house. The Vandal, indeed, is free to wreak his vengeance anywhere he please, so long as he is supported by sufficient wealth. The amenity of his neighbours is nothing to him; the regrets of those for whom a mansion hallowed by time and rich in associations is no mere mass of bricks and mortar, avail not at all. He only knows that the house is his own, because he has paid for it, and that he can and will do what he likes with his own. If a popular agitation should increase the value of his property, then he will sell and compliment himself on the astuteness which bought at the right moment. Now, if the Vandals cherished a respect for the form which should govern life, they would refrain their hand. They would reflect that a beautiful house is the creation of an artist no less than a beautiful picture or a beautiful book. But the man who would shrink from cutting up a canvas or burning a book has no scruple at all in razing a house to the ground. Here, of course, an obvious economy is implied. The value of a canvas is not enhanced by scraping, and a book, however bitterly

its owner disapproves of it, may fetch a few shillings or pounds at an auction sale. The destruction of a house, on the other hand, is often profitable. Where once stood the harbourage of a single family, a lofty mountain of flats may quickly rise. It is this avarice that has prompted the destruction of many an ancient quarter in Paris. Or a new street may save the idle foot-passenger a hundred yards, and that he may reach his useless destination a little quicker, the most ancient landmark may be sacrificed. But while the vandalism of our towns is heart-breaking, far worse is that spirit of greedy destruction which destines the country to be a builder's playground, and fells in an hour trees whose growth may be measured by centuries.

As we write, the grandiose river-way to London is threatened,—the river-way which hitherto has escaped by a miracle. Despite the encroachment of London, the Thames at Twickenham and Richmond still flows between forest-glades. Now and again an austere classical mansion interrupts the vista of green, and gives to the spectacle a humane touch of elegance and splendour. The paltry villas, which may last, perhaps, a paltry thirty years, are in the background, it is true, but they are unseen. And now comes the wealthy speculator, with his bank-notes and his lack of reverence, to lay waste the paradise. Marble Hill is already threatened, and if that be allowed to go, who knows but the jerry-builder

may work his will upon Orleans, Lebanon, and York Houses? There is but one other scene in Europe so splendid as this river sweep, so fine a blending of the art of man and of nature, which is the art of God—and that is the view from the terrace of St Germain. But unless private generosity or the taxpayers come to our aid, St Germain will be left without a rival. That Marble Hill has escaped so many years is wonderful indeed. It is beautiful; it is rich in association; its house and trees have endured the shock of two centuries. Therefore it possesses all the qualities which tempt the Vandal to destruction. It was built for Lady Suffolk; its gardens were designed by Pope. All the wit and talent of the eighteenth century sparkled beneath the shadow of its trees or within its spacious parlours. Poets addressed verses to the house and to the lady who dwelt within it. "Marble Hill fired Mordaunt," says Mr D. S. M'Coll, who has eloquently fought the Vandals; "it softened Swift, and is Pope's most poetical work.

'My groves, my echoes, and my birds
Have taught him his poetic words,'

it says of him in Swift's Dialogue. Marble Hill is a monument of our poetry, where we may taste the orderly dream of eighteenth-century classics. The trees of it have outgrown the order, it is true, even as its paradise of birds 'out-sings' all the poetic words of the designer. But a poet made for us 'this scene,' and we

ought to be the sorrier to destroy it."

Indeed we ought. But are we? From the first the house seemed doomed, and Swift's prophecy has been ominously and literally fulfilled. "Some South Sea broker," he wrote—

"Some South Sea broker from the city
Will purchase me, and more's the pity;
Let all my fine plantations waste,
To fit them to his vulgar taste."

That is precisely what is happening now. That is precisely what would have happened long since had the gardens not been protected by a piece of ground, where at certain seasons the floods encroach. And if attempts at salvation fail, maybe the owner will comfort himself with the reflection that he is but fulfilling a poet's scornful prophecy.

Not far from Twickenham another piece of vandalism is threatened. Hogarth's house will presently come to the ground, if a sufficient subscription be not made to save it. The money asked is not much—only £1500—yet in three months a mere tithe has been collected. At Chiswick it is the same story, as at Twickenham. The house has been sold as part of a property destined for the reception of villa-residences, and unless it be speedily rescued, it will either be destroyed or dilapidated. Now, there is every reason why an effort should be made to preserve the house. Hogarth is one among the few glories of our English school. Even if we forget for the moment that he was a great artist,

we should still remember that he illustrated the life of his age as eloquently and as wittily as did Fielding in another art. He belongs, then, to England, more intimately even than does Sir Joshua, and most closely of all he belongs to Chiswick. There he lived—in this plain and simple house—for fifteen years; there he was buried when death overtook him; and if there be any virtue in the visiting of shrines, it is at Chiswick that we should pay our respect to William Hogarth. Though the house is but a fragment of itself, there are still marks by which it may be known. On the gate-posts are the leaden urns, which Garrick gave to his friend for the proper embellishment of his house. And were the building saved, the rest would be easy. The house will be turned into a memorial museum, whence nothing shall be excluded that illustrates the art and the life of William Hogarth, and thus honour shall be done in the wisest fashion to a painter of exquisite skill and fancy. Surely England owes something to the memory of Hogarth, and even Chiswick might gird herself to a sacrifice, for, to put the matter on the lowest possible basis, she will find her profit in the pilgrims who worship at Hogarth's shrine.

But, says the hustler, why save anything but time? Hogarth is dead and done with; indeed, he has long outstayed his welcome, and there are plenty of live dogs eager to be rammed down the public's throat. The rising generation is knocking at the door, decri-

ing the competition of their elders. So let us destroy what our fathers have builded, and congratulate ourselves that we have even a pittance from the vandalism. Let us sacrifice the form and manner of life that we may cram one other foolish ambition into our span of years. Amenity, killed by speed or avarice, seems no longer of any account. Yet some may remain who still respect the leisurely, well-ordered practices of their forefathers. "In an imperfect work," said Thoreau, "time is an ingredient, but into a perfect work time does not enter." Strange it is that this wise aphorism should have come to us from the country of the hustlers, and it is a consolation to reflect that no haste can impair its wisdom nor any trust on earth obliterate its eternal truth.

Yet happily some careers still exist which are not merely measured by money and advertisement. In every part of our Empire there are pioneers doing their work simply and fighting the Empire's enemies bravely, with no more reward than an honest man may ask. They work and they fight far from the telegraph. They are safe alike from the insolence of correspondents and the interference of Government. While they cannot be exposed to the braggart criticism of the in-expert, they are something better than puppets dangling on a string. They keep their own counsel, and they exercise their own authority. Their life, often dull and remote, is

not marred by the vulgarity and false ambition of 'to-day. Mr Hugh Clifford, whose admirable 'Bush-Whacking'¹ is the best antidote we know for the passion of sensationalism, rightly claims that the spirit of ancient patriotism survives in the guardians of our outposts. Their diet is unsavoury: rice, chillies, and salt-fish is not the best food to march upon. Yet the pioneers dream of dinners they will eat one day in London; they compose *menus* with an exquisite relish; and never regret that they are doing their country's work ill-fed and unknown. "The excitement, the joy of the Elizabethan adventurers is theirs"—we quote Mr Clifford's own words—"the glamour, the intoxication of the Unknown is upon them, as daily they press forward into new lands, untrodden by their fellows." So they march cheerfully through the jungle of the Benighted Land, and know that their toil is more than rewarded by the capture of a few grim, long-haired rebels.

But the life of these adventurers is lived without a hungry eye clapped always upon self.

"Great Britain," says Mr Clifford, "holds too many frontier lands in her vast clutch to be able to take count of all the petty skirmishes which are for ever going forward in one or another uncared-for corner of the empire." Yet the heroes who watch our distant frontiers need not the stimulus of a headline. "It is the faith which is in them which keeps the white folk moving on their painful paths in Asia." So says Mr Clifford; and assuredly faith in England and in England's beneficent rule is sufficient to overcome even the sense of loneliness, the bitter sentiment of insignificance, which must at times attack the most sanguine. Happily, then, all men do not harbour the same ambition, and when we are tired of watching the speed of pigmies entered for a paltry race, we may turn our eyes to the outposts of Empire, where heroes, ignoring the hurry and scandal of modern life, follow their duty in obscure content, and look for no better reward than the approval of the expert and the dumb gratitude of conquered aliens.

¹ Bush-Whacking, and other Sketches. By Hugh Clifford, C.M.G. Edinburgh and London: William Blackwood & Sons.

THREE NOVELS.

WE are constantly assured that the novel is the form of the writing art most characteristic of the age, and the assurance is probably well founded. Its truth, however, does not lie in the multitude of novels. The fact that huge numbers of people are incapable of any more serious intellectual effort than that of following a few coarsely labelled puppets through a series of improbable accidents and stereotyped emotions is merely significant of those people's intellectual feebleness. That is a social significance, and perhaps a grave one. It is, indeed, almost alarming to reflect what a decline in the intellectual qualities of the novelists now popular there has been from those of the novelists popular in the last generation, or the last but one. Think of the contemporary equivalents—in point of popularity, I mean—of Dickens and Thackeray. Both of those great writers were content to be something less than profound when they philosophised and wrote at large, but both assumed that their readers were capable of appreciating the English language as used by intelligent and thoughtful adults. At present we have novelists who—to put genius and creation on one side—go deeper into life and are more suggestive of its difficulties than either Dickens or Thackeray: Mr Meredith and Mr Hardy leap to the mind. But of the writers

whose popularity is at all on a plane with that of Dickens and Thackeray there is hardly one who appeals to thought at all. I do not affect to despise them: they have gifts of their own. Yet the only one I can recollect who writes as for readers prepared to use their minds is Mrs Humphry Ward. I am of that unfortunate minority which does not greatly enjoy her works, but it is absurd to deny (as the crowing critic does) that they are informed with thought and cultivation, and in that respect contrast with her popular rivals. But I digress. The reason why the novel is the form of art characteristic of the age is that it is only in the novel that any adequate attempt is made to explain the age to itself. The much-abused stage does at times present us with ideas of our social phases, or at anyrate with some opinions on them, notably in Mr Jones's plays; but either because of the multiplying of books or because we are intellectually degenerate, we are no longer able to understand thoughtful speech when it is spoken. Whatever their idea, the expression of our plays has always to be that of the nursery. Our poetry, again, or all of it that counts, is exclusively lyrical. There is a reason for this, and the fact may be the text of another sermon: I must not further digress. For an ex-

planation of ourselves in art, then, we are thrown back upon the novel.

In this respect, as well as for other reasons, I have lately read three new novels with great interest. They are Mrs Craigie's 'The Serious Wooing,' Mr George Moore's 'Sister Teresa,' and Mr Edward Hutton's 'Frederick Uvedale.' Mrs Craigie and Mr Moore, of course, have their public; but without pretending to much knowledge of the book-market, I believe I may say that it is not the huge public which answers to that of Dickens and Thackeray. I mention this for the sake of clearness, and to avoid inconsistency: both possess very strongly that habit of thoughtfulness, and both make that intellectual appeal, which I find wanting in the most popular. Mr Edward Hutton is, as I believe, "a new writer." Now, the clearest fact to be observed of the social English at present is spiritual apathy. There are practically no strong enthusiasms left generally among us. It may be that an enthusiasm for empire, for the political future of the race, is growing; it has not yet touched the hearts and lives of us. The social ideals which accompanied the middle-class supremacy in England are dead; and, what is more melancholy still, the reactions against them are dead also. The most serious and biting part of Mrs Craigie's comedy displays this apathy at its ugliest; Mr Moore and Mr Hutton show an ancient form of spirituality possessing a special attraction in the midst

of this apathy,—an attraction which may be important, and is most certainly interesting. But I will not dwell any longer on these general considerations; my readers, I hope, will see them implicit in my particular criticisms.

Mrs Craigie has had two styles. She began in a whimsical, light-hearted fashion of comedy, showing the influence of Mr Meredith in conception and presentment, and not seldom in phrase. She then wrote a novel and a sequel to it very much in the manner of Disraeli. In those books the comedy was of a firmer kind than that she had achieved before. There were other pleasures in the books. There was a wistful sympathetic recalling of the vigours and passions and ambitions of an earlier, but not far earlier, generation. It was as though one waited in an old-fashioned drawing-room to see some very old lady, and mused over the events of her radiant youth. Disraeli himself, very cleverly drawn, strolled piquantly through the story. There was a genuine and interesting romance. But for one interested in the fortunes of contemporary English literature, the most important quality was still a genius for the comic appreciation of character, a quality most infrequent among us to-day. In 'The Serious Wooing' this quality is more marked than ever: partly, perhaps, because its exercise is the staple business of the book, but partly also because experience and practice have strength-

ened it. There is not the fascination of association which one enjoyed in 'Robert Orange' and 'The School for Saints,' but on the other hand there is no prop of imitation. One recalls Mr Meredith now and again, perhaps, but in the spirit rather than the letter. Mrs Craigie writes plainly and naturally, and with concealing art. But the comedy is the thing, and that is brilliant. For once in a way the adjective is used in a literal sense. One does not merely smile and wag the head: one gazes with admiration on figures thrown into a strong and wicked light. Their follies and vices and weaknesses dance in the sunlight. So much so, so plainly do they speak for themselves, that I am rather sorry there is an actual and conscious intrigue of malevolence, the interception of letters, lying, and so on. Such things may happen, but as a rule the evil that is done by the prosperous, selfish, and narrow-minded on the better spirits they dislike is done more smoothly — more as they eat their daily bread. However, there had to be a story. The contrast and complement to the people satirised are a pair of passionate lovers, and an enthusiasm for a Movement—a socialistic one, with a rule of submission and sacrifice. In this last factor I seemed to feel something a little outworn, at least not typical of the present, but I believe it is true enough. The sequence of the love-affair is clever and touching, in the gradual and finally complete

weaning of a fashionable woman from her prejudices: the man appealed to me less, but that is the way of man. To return to the more important matter. The narrowness, the insincerity, the pettiness, the utter earthiness of the "fashionable" people Mrs Craigie exhibits, are really and truly appalling. They were never so bad in England before: I say it with some knowledge of our social history. There was a plentiful lack of spirituality in Horace Walpole's society, I grant; a tolerably complete absorption in little intrigues and humours. But there is a very wide difference between the complacent superiority of a real aristocracy, the assumption that there was nothing better than its social affairs and amusing comments on them, and the sordid, snobbish, defiant, and yet mistrusting intolerance of Mrs Craigie's reptiles. There is nothing aristocratic about them; they reek of commercialism, and they hate those who they know despise their lives with the nervous malignancy of the uneasy. Therein is this difference from even such late portraits as Thackeray's aristocratic snobs, his Lady Kew, and the like. Are they real? Well, I have met their like: I do not pretend to know the extent of their representativeness. It is an appalling picture: but it is brilliant comedy.

Both Mr Hutton and Mr Moore point to one way of escape from the sordidness of contemporary life and its am-

bition, the want of satisfaction for spiritual aspirations in the contemporary atmosphere, and that way is the service of the Roman Catholic Church. It is a theme not to be handled lightly by the casual layman: the risk of offending those who feel deeply on a subject on which one's own feelings are not deep is a risk I would not run. It is enough to say that this refuge has gained very much in importance among us of late years for the reasons I have named, and to profess the belief that it is one which the genius and spirit of the English will never largely accept. The case is different in the two books: Mr Hutton's hero, seeking for an outlet for a spiritual activity, finds it in promoting the temporal aims of the Pope; Mr Moore's heroine seeks rest from the warfare of flesh and spirit in the cloister. But the material agency is the same.

The chief reason I find for welcoming Mr Hutton's advent is that he writes like a man absorbed in the things of the intellect and of the higher emotions, that he takes us for a flight above the common details of life. And he does this while remaining in the present. Most of those who try to beguile us from daily life merely stick our sentiments and sentimentalities into an age of greater violence. Perhaps a result of the realities of war and death with which, if we have any imagination at all, it must surely now be possessed, will be to kill those sawdust heroes and theatrical duels: I sincerely hope so. Meanwhile here is a

writer who can rise above the commonplace of the present without pretending to leave it altogether. That is his aim, and the literary art with which he seeks to achieve it, though imperfect, is of great promise. He succeeds in creating an atmosphere of dim but poignant family tradition for his hero, which does really explain and attract. He succeeds in realising the strong but wayward impulses of his hero's mind. And at times he writes like an angel. I quote a fragment of the conversation between Uvedale and his dying love: "Is the night fine out there?" she said, trying to motion towards the window. 'Is the moon shining, and are the stars out?' 'Yes, yes,' he said; 'they are looking down into the sea, and the moon is full.'" That, surely, by accident or art—and it is fair to suppose it art—has exactly the right tone and the right cadence for the poetry of romance, a daring and justified use of a possible verse. It is vague and mystical, and the book is so: that is clearly its intention. But I must remember that I am criticising, and must not content myself with the better part of criticism alone. Mr Hutton has gone to Mr Pater for his style, and for the sort of book he was writing that was very well, though there are, in my opinion, better models for a beginner. But it was not well to reproduce Mr Pater's little tricks on every page, and to repeat one of them—the use of the word "just": "just that," "just happiness" and so forth—

to weariness was very ill. I speak grossly: probably the imitation was unconscious, but that is the effect. Oddly enough, he represents Mr Pater as lecturing on Plato's Republic in a truly surprising fashion. "We too," said he—"we too desire a place in this City of the Perfect! We too will spend our time in poetry and music and art and song." Since Plato was particular in banishing all this from his Republic, there is clearly something wrong—unless it be an undeserved satire on Mr Pater's scholarship. But these are details: I should not go into them were it not that it is Mr Hutton's first novel, and that I am becoming a veteran critic. It is more serious to find just one or two little symptoms of a certain conceit in refinement. They are due to a lack of humour, which is apparent. A sort of humour would indeed have knocked the book to pieces, but another sort would have mellowed it. Are we English losing our humour? There seems to be very little about. Our professed humourists, periodical and other, do indeed deal in wit—of varying qualities—but their humour is not abundant: one cannot blame the author of a serious romance of the soul for lacking it. But humour would have given his hero an interest. The achievement, then, of this book is partial and unequal—yet the promise is beyond doubt, and above all the tone, the attitude to life, the sense of what matters, are in their way noble. Nothing common or mean.

Now for Mr George Moore. I always feel myself militant when I begin a book by Mr George Moore, perhaps because so much of his literary work has been fighting. I knit my brows and I ask: What now? My only quarrel with him about 'Sister Teresa' is that it did not form an integral part of 'Evelyn Innes.' He admits in a preface that it should have done so, and the admission, however courageous, by no means palliates the fault. It was a matter of so many thousand words and the conveniences of publishing, we are told; but an artist should have insisted on doing the artistic thing. The whole should have been one book, in whatever number of volumes it mattered not. The theme is the struggle, in a nature essentially religious, strongly passionate, and with a genius for music, of these three elements—art, the flesh, and the denial of the flesh; and 'Sister Teresa' merely describes the ultimate triumph of the last. I thought when I read 'Evelyn Innes,' and think still, that Mr George Moore, with all his powers, admired by few more than by me, had chosen a theme beyond them. The relation of sex to art, and especially to music, that alone is a subject for a very great master. But Mr Moore has complicated it by making the woman in whom the relation is seen the victim also of a morbidly searching and self-tormenting conscience. No man alive, unless it be Tolstoi, could have thoroughly worked out

the solution. Mr Moore's is plausible; it does not completely satisfy. It is a cruelly needless abrogation both of sex and art, the utter sacrifice of life and intellect. So, at least, it appears to a casual layman. The triumph of religion, as the subject is brought to think it, is based on the complete wearing out of will and mind and body. *That* escape from spiritual apathy is surely not to be desired, whether in this case the art be true or false. In artistic content, if one may use the phrase, 'Sister Teresa' is not equal to 'Evelyn Innes.' Mr Moore's great quality is one which, albeit from afar, recalls the Tolstoi of 'Anna Karenina' and 'Peace and War,' a power of writing quite objectively and yet with absolute sympathy. Its application to the life of a convent is striking; but there is little or nothing else in the book

that gives it scope outside the theme of Evelyn herself. But still the book is an advance: the thought is clearer, the accuracy and freedom of language are greater than in the others. Mr Moore — he also — wants humour, but the want does not spoil anything here, as was too often the case before. That Mr Moore will ever be master of a fine style is unlikely, but his gift of patient and unprejudiced study, and of patient and sincere expression, places him far above the run of pretty, scholarly writers. Also—some critics, I fear, would say, "above all"—he has brought himself to write of emotion and its outcome with essential reticence and delicacy. It is to be sincerely hoped that his present devotion to Gaelic will not rob us of so sure, if so sombre, a recorder of the life we live.

G. S. STREET.

A SIDE-SHOW.

BY "LINESMAN."

THERE is unusual animation this windy May morning at a fusty, dusty little camp squatting, like a mushroom clump, alongside the railway on the high veldt. A train or two stand in the red-roofed station, nodulous and spiky looking trains, with mysterious things bulging beneath tarpaulins, and red-nosed men, pierced with the cold of an early journey, clinging to the bulges, or lying so intermingled with wheels, boxes, waggon-shafts, and other indefinite lumber, that a person unused to supply-trains and their inhabitants would risk a little currency on their never being able to extricate themselves. Over the high sides of two or three trucks protrude the grave, inquiring faces of horses, their pointed ears turning in a thousand directions in half as many seconds, as people dash about noisily on the little platform, lifting and dropping wooden cases, shouting to friends or assistants within a few feet of them, losing their own things and finding the things of others in the way that people on platforms have done ever since such places have existed to render a habitable globe less habitable. Here and there lie heaps of "kit," encyclopædic word, embracing coats, helmets, Gordian knots of straps, the green squashy cyclinders of officers' valises, even slain

poultry and raw rations, tied with string, perhaps, to a pair of boots or the stock of a rifle. The secret is out—a column is in process of formation, and the dusty little camp is being fed from the base thirty miles away by means of this noisy station, like a patient through a cannula. The noise increases; down with a clang fall the iron sides of the trucks on the leading train. Some of the red-nosed men are unlacing the tarpaulins, which, released, flap and crack in the wind like the mainsail of a twenty tonner. Off they come, and lo! beneath squat ugly khaki guns, nozzles upwards, as if yawning at being rudely awaked, three on a truck: what potentialities that truck bears this day! One can never look at a gun at rest without saying to oneself "When?" or at a gun in the very act of belching its flame-girt horror without ejaculating "Now!" I have heard a whole regiment of onlookers do that in unison. There is more than steel and thunder in a cannon; there is that of the uncanny, of which it is impossible to write, which, if written, would excite the derision of the very men who feel it most. We shall never get our column started at this rate. Off come more tarpaulins, beneath them waggons, boxes of biscuits, tins of "bully," water-carts, ammunition-carts, also ambulance-

carts, potentialities again of a sort complementary to those of the khaki squatters in the next truck. Then the flaps of the horse-trucks are thrown down, with more noise than the others if possible, the cargo not being of insensate iron and wood, but of nervous, wide-eyed animals, who start and snort at the offensive clamour. They are then led out, one by one, down the slippery ramp, stepping gingerly, much afraid of man's extraordinary devices. These are the gun horses, and their composure is quickly regained as they are led up to the well-known limbers, which have meantime been shoved and handspiked and blasphemed from their trucks. And so the work goes on, with shoutings, jammed fingers, and profanity until the trains are cleared, and all the inanimate portions of a column lie like leaves in Vallombrosa upon the platform, waiting to be collected by the myrmidons of the transport officer. The latter stands tranquil, conscious of his power. Confusion soon freezes into order before that cold eye; scattered biscuit boxes, &c., seem to leap together by magic from odd corners of the maze, and together are borne ponderously off, once more the entity which had its birth in some active brain in a distant office,—“three days' rations for Colonel Jones's column.”

Meanwhile, in camp, Colonel Jones, king that is to be, is standing at his tent-door watching the fighting portion of his command converging

upon him from the four points of the compass. A company is just marching dustily in from Platspruit, ten miles away; another is expected from Zandkop on the other side; a third from Paarde Rand, a hill-top station wide of the line. These, with the three companies, the normal population of the camp, will form his infantry, the backbone of his fighting body. Few enough, in all conscience, but with garrisons at starvation point and “nights in bed” but an algebraic symbol, it is impossible to spare more. On the round green bosom of the veldt, miles away, his keen eye perceives a square black spot with smaller spots in advance of and around it. These, he knows, are his cavalry on their way to join,—two squadrons of the famous old 25th Dragoons, who so far have had the chance of doing little more with their fine English horses than eat them in beleaguered Ladysmith. The black spots become invisible in an invisible dip, they reappear, bigger and blacker, they will be in soon, and old Jones wonders if old Brown is in command, hoping he is, because he hasn't set eyes on him since, let me see, those jolly days at Bareilly when they two quarrelled complacently over Miss Robinson, the Commissioner's daughter, unwitting that she was already secretly married to young Jenkins of the 150th Bengal Lancers, and afraid to tell her father! Oh, those placid old days, they appear sacred amid the worry and responsibility of these anxious young ones. When will Jehu come flogging along

the veldt road shouting joyously, "It is peace!"?

But the camp already possesses cavalry, to wit, 150 men of one of those harum-scarum, dare-devil Colonial corps which have done such fine service throughout the war—jolly, reckless fellows, the courage of all nations, with men in the ranks who have fought in Cuba, in Texas, in Timbuctoo. A useful lot, thinks Colonel Jones, but somewhat of an anxiety to his sealed-pattern soldier's mind, not sufficiently regardful of keeping touch with plodding infantry, and apt to cover the scenery for miles with the scandalous spectacle of wild horses scampering madly before a brace of yelling troopers—apt also to return to camp, grinning, in the evening with deceased poultry dangling from the saddle "D's."

By sundown all units have been reported in camp, orders are issued for to-morrow's move, and Colonel Jones, as he turns into his blankets, breathes a little prayer, more to Fortune than his God as is the soldier's wont, that chances will be given him to show what manner of man he is. Around the evening camp-fires his orders and he have been discussed, until fatigue and irate orderly sergeants combine to silence every sound but the deep breathing of a thousand sleepers.

Sleep well, oh column! You are but a side-show, no deep-sea cable vibrates with the news of your concentration, the men in the big arena have scarcely time to hear of your sixpenny

arrival in the greatest war-show on earth; but here you are all the same, a thousand fighting men, no mean thing in your own perspective, and as prepared to, and as likely to lose your lives and fall eternally asleep as any amongst the Titans. Sleep well!

'Tis a fine hunting morn, and off goes the hunt at dawn, a chilly dawn, with a mist like the smoke of fine tobacco curling around the grassy hummocks of the veldt, and the air so still that the breath of the horses puffs upwards in little blue jets. Going to be a hot day, say the old hands, for all the tingle is in the air now; the freshmen swing their arms and wish they had put on another jersey. The procession streams anyhow out through the gap in the wire entanglement, from every spike of which hangs a diamond drop of dew and the delicate tracery of a wet spider's web; a company here, a gun there, a mounted officer pushing forward here, another there trying to turn his "bobbery" horse to get back. With a rumble-dumble and metallic jingle the two field guns bump over the sun-baked ruts, and behind them groans a 4.7 naval gun, long of snout, elephantine of carriage and wheels, Jack ashore in every lurch of his rolling gait behind the plodding oxen. Outside the wire a halt is called: there is a forming of infantry, wheeling of artillery and baggage, and a curious process of disintegration amongst the mounted men who are to lead the way. The column

is getting into shape, and in any other war but this a mighty respectable shape it would appear. The cavalry, who have extended on the move, now cover the country in front for three miles, with little clumps on either flank; and seeing this Colonel Jones gives the word, and off again lumbers the whole caravan, due northwards, heading straight for—what?

For a little laager of a hundred Boers, comfortably ensconced in a hollow designed for surprises, says the Intelligence officer; this only as a premise, however—the Intelligence officer has heard his department too often chaffed for being eupeptic in the matter of information to offer it as a conclusion, though his news for weeks past, gesticulated *ore rotundo* by native scouts with rolling eyes and coats of many colours, has been plain enough on this point. The laager is there right enough, its garrison also as reported, a hundred men and no more, but within two hours' ride there lies a town, at present the two hundredth that has done duty as the headquarters of the Boer Government and army, and who knows but that handsome, untruthful Louis Botha, getting wind of our venture, may not descend to the assistance of his outpost, turning our side-show into something more suited to the big arena, no pleasant prospect for performers so modest as we? But possibilities such as these are not for the common ear, and the columnar private soldier, glad to be stepping it out again across the

fresh green veldt after his long term of hard labour at patrolling and sentry-going, as guardian of the line, sees ahead of him only ridge after ridge of grass, each with its little puckered eyebrow of stones atop, and the prospect of an immensity of fun when the time for rushing the laager shall arrive. He knows (though he should not) that other columns such as his own are marching from various points, converging upon the selfsame laager, and to himself and his pals, with wealth of metaphor and prognostication unlimited, he pictures the doomed Dutchmen therein as scorpions within a ring of flame, as chickens already hatched. Cheery British soldier, this is no place for his eulogy; but who can help admiring his plumb settlement of the uncertain before he wins, his grim certainty that he is winning when he is already beaten! For he has been beaten, has the British soldier, and had he not been, we should have known nothing of his grandest characteristics. And now behold him footing it smartly over the grass, helmet awry to turn the sidelong rays of the two 'hours' old sun, tobacco smoke and badinage issuing alternately from his mouth, in one extreme corner of which hangs his short pipe with inverted bowl. Suddenly there is a distant sound ahead, which sends an electric shock through all the lines of marching men. At home in London town we should know well enough what it was,—a boy on the trot drawing his stick along

the area railings; but out here we know what it is too, a score of Mausers in action. So ho! The cavalry have drawn them already; precious little surprise there is going to be about this! Some put their pipes away, others, who had not been smoking, pull out and light theirs, and all increase the pace up the rise, until halted by command. From the top one can see—nothing! The hurried click-clack is still audible, apparently coming from a low stone-topped ridge overhanging a farm about two miles ahead, but not a living soul is in sight, Boer or Briton. Then, as from the very ground itself, a galloping rider appears speeding towards us. "Bring up the gun," says Colonel Jones, standing by his horse, telescope to eye; no need to ask "which gun?" the old salt behind the team of bullocks has lurched up the rise and is alongside in no time. "Action front!" Round swings the twenty-foot tube, there is a business-like bustle amongst the gunners, and "old Nelson" is ready, gaping cavernously, the cynosure of every eye. The horseman dashes up to the colonel, his horse trembling and sweating. "Thirty Boers on that ridge, sir; our men have dismounted in the hollow." "Let drive!" says Jones over his shoulder to the eager youth in charge of the big gun; spruce lord of the thunder, this is a happy moment for thee! The officer runs to his charge, the massive breech opens and shuts with a clang like that of the door of a safe, there is a

squinting along the twenty feet of khaki steel, a breathless pause, and then—! No word can picture the catastrophe when heavy ordnance speaks at close quarters. Earth, air, and sky are momentarily no more, every sense is slain, even that of hearing; the very horses do not start and rear as they do at lesser sounds, but stand with trembling legs and distended eyes. But the echoes die away, and only the thin dry shriek of the receding shell is heard high in the air. All glasses are levelled at the ridge, from which no sound of rifle-fire comes, for the Boers must cower tight to the earth with that thing in the air, as a covey of partridges crouches when the peregrine's call is heard above them. A good shot! Up rises a warm brown column of earth from the very eyebrow of the ridge, and after an interval back comes the faint roar of the exploding projectile. Another shell is sent howling on its way, falling this time over the crest line, only the sound of its burst reaching our ears. Up from the ground below again little spots appear, and begin to creep upwards; the cavalry scouts are going to try their luck once more. They creep higher and higher, backed up by many other spots; they top the ridge and disappear over it. Then a helio begins to wink its brilliant eye at us; "all clear," "limber up," on we go again. But the damage is done; back to the laager fly those thirty Boers. "The British are coming, commandant!" "Enteric seize them!" grumbles that officer, a

gallant man and a bibulous, who has held his laager here for six months now undisturbed, with maledictions when news comes of other laagers evaporating into the thin air of "handsup-dorp."¹ Grumbling still, the stout Dopper beckons to two trusty Burghers, and bids them speed to headquarters to the Commandant General, that handsome, untruthful man, asking for reinforcements, or at any rate for orders. But there is no time to wait for either, the British are inconveniently close, and enteric can hardly seize them before they arrive at that ridge dominating the camp, though God has been very good to his chosen in this respect;² does not every bed in those huge hospitals hold a babbling, fevered rooinek? The commandant points one finger at the ridge in question, and in a twinkling his men are upon it; no word of command, no standing upon the order of their going, just going, and in the very cunningest manner, here a man there a man, wriggling around hummocks, trotting up little rain-washed dongas, little, but good enough to hide a Dutchman, galloping across hollows, finally dismounting just under the crest, and crawling each man to a stone. There is a hasty adjustment of bandoliers, in go the clips, and the ridge is occupied and ready; the English for all

their Zeiss glasses have not seen so much as the crown of a hat, nor will they unless a man drops his when the time comes to bolt. But look, over the rise a thousand yards ahead appear not hats but helmets, one, two, three, and more to follow, then faces, then burly English bodies. The crouching Boers grunt; "wait!" growls a voice, and they wait. The silence is intense and to the oncomers reassuring; a dozen helmets appear, all at identically the same interval the one from the other; there is a pause, and then tituppy-toppity the advanced scouts canter over the ridge in full view. "Now!" growls the same voice, there is a rattle and a roar, around the approaching horsemen spurt a hundred little geysers of yellow dust. One man is down, no, it is his horse only; the rider leaps to his feet and scuttles, rabbit-wise, behind an ant-heap, the others, as if pulled by one string, swing round and are over the ridge again before you can say knife, at any rate before the Mausers can be recharged. But the Burghers are not to have all the shooting, and are soon lying as flat as flounders behind their stones as the British scouts, having found a good spot, begin to pepper the ridge; buzz, buzz, come the bullets, hitting the stones with a smack that makes the squab faces behind them shrink and start. Even that dismounted

¹ The generic term given by the Boers still in the field to the refugee camps within the British lines, wherein dwell the hundreds of Dutchmen who have surrendered, or "hands-upped."

² This is not blasphemy but solid Boer conviction. A Boer Mishna would be a more complacent document than was ever compiled by Jew or Roundhead.

pig is seeking to take revenge from behind his ant-heap for his slain horse, which lies like an inverted table, all four legs stiff in the air, and a good shot he is, *verdom* him! Now, too, away on the right out of range, a considerable party of horse-men is stealing fast over the grass, like the shadow of a wind-swept cloud, appearing, disappearing over the billowy rises and in the dips. They are galloping for the right of the ridge two miles away, thus out-flanking the Boers who hold the left thereof. They reach its foot, spread rapidly upwards, fan-wise, and in a few moments are on the summit: time to go, Burghers, if you mean to go! "Go!" roars the 4·7 from away back in the haze; "Go!" yells the immense projectile from the heights above, from middle air, from the riven earth, as it plunges with uproar terrific, amid whirling stones and steel and sheets of crimson flame ten yards in front of a sangar. The squab faces blanch as they press themselves against the ground in homage to that awful avatar. "Go!" again commands the angry far-off sailor with thunderous voice. They go; crawling and sidling down the hill, pale faces over shoulder, distended eyes marking the unseen track of the oncoming shell in the air. "Look where it comes again!" Was Hamlet's noiseless visitant as terrible as this shrieking thing of death? It bursts over the crest-line, hurling its fragments after the flying men. The latter reach their ponies, leap into the saddle, and are off like the wind, bending low

over the saddle-bow, still looking backwards. A dozen bullets from the cavalry, now on their left, sighing over them like a little breeze, send them faster, as bending yet lower, they speed up the opposite ridge, halt on its summit a second, and disappear all together, like dabchicks on a pond. On rolls the British column, one! two!—one! two!—as irresistible in its small way as the immense purpose it represents, no hurry, no lagging, no superfluous display of interest; how maddening to an enemy must be the steady middle-class determination which, having with little pother agreed that a thing, a ridge, a country, an empire is desirable, straightway proceeds to take it, the more certainly and silently the more buffets come in the taking. There has been much talk and a pardonable fear of the Yellow Journalism, which has crept in amongst us like the blatant advertisements one finds inserted between the leaves of good and solid books new from the bookseller. There are those who see in this new journalistic cult a sign of disease or decay, the yellowing flag of plague just unfurling from our ancient ship, signifying that the pestilence of public untruthfulness and hysteria, caught from infected foreign shores, is abroad. But surely there is no cause for alarm. Has not this glaring, noisy rubbish-fire but illuminated the drab and dignified silence of the British nation in the colossal task with which it has found itself confronted?

Found itself, I say, for the surprise of the discoveries made by our nation in South Africa would have sent weaker men running drivelling and afraid before the doors of Janus, whining for them to be shut lest worse befall.

Situation at 4 P.M., then, to borrow the phraseology of Aldershot, as follows: Red force (British) in possession of high ground commanding the late site of the enemy's laager; the latter, uncoloured,—unless one applies to them that antique hue not seen since Dr Johnson's day, "sad-coloured,"—in full retreat northwards. Broken their peace of months, packed and shifted the unclean *olla podrida* of tarpaulins, seedy tents, and Wormwood-Scrub-bian pots and pans, atoms which fortuitously concouring, compose that unfloral anthology, a Boer laager (this in honour of our mention of the trisyllable doctor!). But a Boer in flight is in his element, and never so full of resource and nerve. He is therefore the most recuperative soldier on earth, given a strong man, with a long strong tongue to meet him *in cursu*, to turn him, or at least stop him with horrible revilings, and with a genius too common among Boer leaders to be properly termed genius, to point out to him a position as good or better than the one he has quitted. Nor do these particular Boers lack such a leader; they are stopped and turned, like a pack of riotous hounds on a false scent by the huntsman's rating, and sulkily consent to lie along the hill-crest for positively

this night only. So throughout the bitter cold night they lie, blanketless, foodless, not over-sanguine of their commandant's blasphemous-pentateuchical promises of help on the morrow, a line of shivering Micawbers under the winter moon. Meantime the side-show methodically occupies their late ridge, methodically dines, and methodically lays itself down to slumber, all but the sentries who stand, rifle over shoulder, looking like black pumps against the sky, thinking of the village pub with its warm red blinds, and its amber beer, glowing with ruby and opal lights when held between the eye and the roasting fire; what an oxymoron of a thought, here on this freezing ridge! "Yes, it's please to walk in front, sir, when there's trouble in the wind"; but believe me, lonely soldier-man, there are eyes as kindly as the glow of the alehouse window looking towards you across the 7000 miles of chaos and old night—ay, from nearer than that; for the writer is but one of many who know the thoughts and wishes chasing each other in that helmeted head of yours, who hears, as plainly as he, does the ring of your rifle-butt on the frozen stone, the inaudible cry you send up, "How long?"

Who has not felt a longing to apostrophise that romantic, uncanny, desperately uncomfortable hour which precedes the dawn? Clever men who have never seen it have done so beautifully, so beautifully and sympathetically that one is certain that they are clever, and that they have never seen

it. But the "stupid" British army in South Africa, which sees it daily, pictorially speaking, leaves it severely alone, merely referring to it as such and such an hour G.M. How intensely cold it is at 4 G.M. on this hill-top of ours! the sleeping men look like lines of immense sugar-loaves so covered and stiff with hoar-frost are the blankets which cover them. It is time to get up, the cooks are already crouching over their eternal task, the lighting of fires. The sentry of the last relief, who has stood immobile for two hours, begins to stamp his feet, blow on his frozen fingers, and feign catarrh; the sergeant of the picket, knowing the signs, looks at his watch. "Time to get them up," he mutters, eyeing the prone sugar-loaves with baleful stare. Then along the line the signal runs, no fluttering flags, but the burly, blue-nosed non-commissioned officer, reminding each grunting sleeper of England's expectation of him by a jog with the rifle-butt, or a caress from the toe of his ammunition-boot. On he goes, his anathema answered by maranatha from each and all of his victims, huge earth-shaking beast that he is. What in animated nature is so insupportable as a man awake whilst others sleep? But all are on their feet in no time. "No prayers, the morn being cold" (to misquote butterfly Pepys), blankets are rolled and packed on the waggons, breakfast bolted (shade of Heliogabalus, let us hope no portion of your punishment is early rising, to

witness such fearsome speed in victualling!), and the troops are ready. Old Jones, muffled to the tips of his ears, is ready; old Nelson is ready, with an icicle dependent from the end of his twenty-foot nose, sniffing the morning air with an elevation of 3000 yards, that being the distance of the ridge in front. During the night more than one message, flashed deviously by lamplight, has been received from the other three columns engaged in the converging movement. All have had fighting: two have had considerable success, capturing a small laager, a Maxim gun, and a few prisoners. But all this delays marching, and no column of three is where it should be for the present purpose, the enclosing and utter absquatulation of the commando which had faced and fled from Colonel Jones the previous day. So that there are bolt-holes to north and east, particularly unfortunate directions, as in them lie two towns, one as aforesaid the present Boer headquarters, the other also strongly held: alack! the "best laid schemes gang aft a-gley"; it is poor sport hunting foxes with the main earths unstopped. But there is yet a chance. If this commando can only be induced to stay where it is for the present, by judicious coquetting on its front, the other columns may make up lost time this day, and by evening the cordon be completed. The only force in position to do this being Colonel Jones's, he, on this frosty morning, ponderously

determines to coquet, starting his delicate advances by sending his cavalry forward to "draw" the ridge in front. They go warily, every horse stepping like Agag, ears cocked, held short by the head, fearing the worst. A reconnaissance must be agony to a horse, with his uncanny premonition of danger, and his anxious responding to anything tense in the atmosphere. But the ridge ahead is silent: higher and higher work the scouts, the taut reins relax, finally the leading men, as if by common impulse, take the bull by the horns, and trot briskly to the summit. It is empty! What game is brother Boer up to, that he lets the first trick go thus easily? On go the cavalry main body, over the crest, disappearing from view down the reverse slope. With an instinct born of eighteen months' campaigning, the crowd upon the ridge behind bend their heads to listen for what seems bound to come. There is a pause, the intense silence of the early morning on the veldt rendered more intense by the stamp of a horse and the rattle of his head-chain. Then, like the roll from a tenor drum, the sound that all have been awaiting comes pulsating through the frosty air, rub-a-dub-a-dub-a-dub, the querulous rattle of Mausers making the most of their time with a transient target in front of them. It comes from a long low spur to our right front, pointing sideways like a huge index-finger across the slope down which our cavalry have trotted, and separated from it

by a rocky stream. Back like the wind thunder the latter, reappearing on the crest like a mob of wild horses,—no place for cavalry, an open slope under hot fire from across a stony spruit! They pull up with a jerk and dismount; the horses are led in bunches under cover, and soon an animated crackle from the crest is answering the diminishing fire from the spur. Old Jones snorts like a war-horse. "I must have that spur," says he, as indeed he must, seeing that it leads cunningly up to high ground from which the enemy can utterly command and enfilade our position. Who better to give it to him than those jolly harum-scarums the Colonial Irregulars? There is a bustle in their lines at the order to move out, a few moments' hurried conversation between old Jones and their white-moustached commander, then out they go, bump, bump, gingle, gingle, sombrero hats flapping as the pace increases, down into the valley and over the spruit, then with a hurroosh and a scamper up the opposite slope, straight for the razor-back of the spur, whilst the big gun lobs his shells deftly over them, dotting the razor-back with columns of powdery earth and smoke. The Boers, whose nerves are not as good as they were in those halcyon days in Natal, do not await the rush, but fly on the wings of terror down to a big donga they know of at the base of the spur. There, with the courage of rats in a hole, they turn and begin to pepper the ridge. The latter replying with interest,

there is a fine set-to of musketry, which comes pealing across the valley to us on our hill, like the sound of rain upon a tin roof. The Boers have their backs to the wall, evidently, or can it be that they are being reinforced? Out with the telescope. Ah! what is that winding down the mountain - side beyond, now hidden beyond a spur, now appearing over the smooth slope like a long black caterpillar? Boers, by all that is unfortunate, and in strength, 500 at least! A malison on that head-quarter town of theirs, and on the handsome untruthful man there commanding, with no eye for dramatic unities; behold him now complicating the plot in the most illicit fashion, turning our side-show into that which will be cheap at a guinea, much less a sixpenny-bit. See also on the high ridges in prolongation of the mountain, more Boers, dotting the skyline for miles, motionless as statues, no doubt scanning the punchbowl below them with field-glasses, ready enough if wanted. The commando on the mountain disappears in the vast recesses and kloofs at its base; away over on the spur the firing has dwindled into a slow but continuous dropping fire, like the big drops before a thunder-storm, and indeed there is a thundery feeling in the air! That commando bodes no good, and old Jones, with an anxious face, orders a company of infantry to prepare to reinforce the Colonials upon the spur. But before they can move the storm breaks; there is a roar from the razor-back, an

angry spitting reply from the donga — worse, from the height commanding the crest of the spur on its right. From our ridge we can see black spots hurrying over the lofty downs: they have outflanked our fellows, by jingo! Now, Nelson! The old salt gravely swings round half right, takes one careful squint at the speeding figures, then boom! “Bang in the middle of ’em!” yells every one. Well done, the spruce lord of thunder. Boom! and boom! again, before the first shell can land. Not for nothing has the big gun the magic letters Q.F. (quick-firing) emblazoned on his breech-block: he can hurry when there is need can the old salt. It is too much for the Boers: they check and dawdle undecidedly, a splendid target. Boom! a bull’s-eye! they turn and flee whence they came: the flank is clear again. But the gallant Colonials have not got off scot-free either; an officer and two men are lying dead gripping the long grass. No more side-show for them, their little part is played. They are buried where they fell, and we from the ridge note in silence through our glasses the picks rising and falling as the grave is dug, and later the little group which stands around it, commending to God the vanished ethereal of the earthly which lies so pale within it. Oh, the pity of it! Other two are jolted into us severely wounded; one dies as soon as the white-covered waggon creeps behind our lines. At nightfall he too is laid to rest, and a sudden silence falls on chattering

groups around the fires as the "Last Post" calls with an infinity of pathos from the little valley behind up to his ascending soul, Good-bye! good-bye! Your duty done, comrade, turn into rest, awaiting the tremendous *réveillé* which shall waken all men.

On the approach of night, the colonel sends orders to those on the spur to evacuate, and to retire on to the main position. The movement is effected without opposition, and all hands settle down together again, wondering not a little as they roll into the blankets as to the vagaries of shows in general, and of this side-show in particular.

But even before the first snore rises the situation changes. There is a sudden exclamation from a sentry, and a bustle at the signal-station. Is not that a lamp flashing away close by to the north-west, blink-a-blink, blink-blink? So the column on our left is in touch after all; now we shall see what we shall see. Off with a message to them, "Join us at dawn"; two Turks are better than one Turk all the world over, by sword-stroke or otherwise. The side-show rolls over in its blankets again, and is soon trumpeting to the stars its peace of mind.

Dawn again — no lazy sergeant-ridden dawn this time, but all men astir and ready at the first streak, looking towards the ridge from whence the lamp was blinking last night. Here they come, making best pace across the rolling veldt, horse, foot, and artillery; their advanced scouts are already within

hail. The colonel trots down the slope to meet the commanding officer, his plan already made. There are some farms nestling below the long slope, of which the spur seized yesterday is the summit, and they are known to contain supplies and forage, possibly women; all three munitions of war to the enemy—the latter perhaps the most valuable. What trait was it in old Mother Eve that has lived through the ages to animate at last these stout-hearted daughters of far-away Friesland, uncouth shrews for the most part, but with something of stubbornness, of courage—nay, considering that their share in the buffets is but the taking of them—of heroism in them, which has spurred their fathers and brothers to the conflict more than all the mere concrete cooking, comfort, and information they have been able to supply? British arms have had no more powerful, insidious enemy than this herd of unenlightened, one-ideaed treacherous women, wherein, not only from the Boer point of view, but from that of all surveyors of mankind, they are to be thanked as contributing to history something very much better than Carlyle's "flat Nothing." Patriotism is at all times a formidable thing, and difficult to uproot, but never so difficult as when it is imbedded like a reef of gold in the solid bedrock of ignorant womanhood, perhaps never so golden and beautiful, shaming the surrounding rubbish into something very like oblivion. We hope that in days to come, when the passion and

hate of this conflict have returned dead to their father Death, men will speak of the fair things they have seen as freely as of the base and ignoble. It has always been the custom of the English to underestimate their enemy before rushing at him, but never until this war to vilify him when down. There has been much of the base and ignoble in our enemy, 'tis true, and but little fair, but, good lack! in what mine again is the gold in tons and the rubbish in ounces? Courage is fair, grit and stoutness of purpose are fair, death *pro patria* is fair; have not the Boers shown them all, unmistakable amid the treachery, bigotry, and vice—the rubbish which alone has been visible to too many of our seers?

So in these farms below us is something worth the taking, and the colonel means to take it. The spur must be recaptured as a preliminary: the Mounted Infantry of the new column shall try their luck this time; quick march every one else for the ridge in front of us, that which was yesterday held by our cavalry. It is soon reached, and is found to be of a semi-circular shape, with the convex side towards the enemy, and the troops, when disposed along its crest, will be able to afford a very pretty exposition of diverging fire. Away over on the spur the Boers are standing up watching our movements, being particularly thick on a little stony knob half-way up the sweeping slope, making the summit look quite bristly with their crowd of tiny up-

right figures. The two field-guns, arrived with the reinforcement, mark them for their own, and bellow simultaneously at the precise moment chosen by old Nelson up on the ridge behind for his sonorous "Be-gone!" The figures disappear before the projectiles can reach them, shell follows shell as the Mounted Infantry move out to their appointed task. They are in good hands are these "mounted feet"; no more dashing commander than their gallant captain, late of the Hussars, has ever galloped before his men. See how they extend whilst at a fast trot, which, as they breast the opposite slope, changes to a canter, then a gallop, then a swift irresistible rush as they near the summit; they are upon it in a twinkling, despite an agitated pop! pop! from the boulders which cover it,—a gallant sight, beholding which the breath is held in anxiety and admiration. Not legitimate Mounted Infantry work, an Aldershot critic would say, this charging of kopjes. Perhaps not, but something very much better, my purist friend—soldiers' work; the work of the handy man, who, seeing a job ahead, does it in the quickest possible time without reference to a text-book. South Africa will henceforth be known as the grave of certain regulations eke of reputations. This time the Boers, thoroughly unnerved, do not stay their flight, but gallop madly back to the high hills beyond, pursued by the shells from the 4.7 to the extreme limit of his range.

One, dropping a few yards in front of the mob, turns them as a flock of sheep are turned by the dog. They race up a donga to the left and pull up out of range, but in full view, on the side of a mighty green down. Oh for that missing north-easterly column of ours! Would British troops but appear where they should appear, on the higher ridge behind them, that commando would be on the march to Handsupdorp tonight. But the farms are clear at any rate. Two mule-waggons are sent bowling down to them with an escort. No women, only a confused mass of bedding, furniture, and household goods; the buildings are fairly stuffed with the stuffy belongings of a Boer family or families. In one room alone there are seven beds ranged alongside one another; a regular barracks this farm, and an ordnance store to boot, for the lofts are full of fodder and mealies, refreshment for man and beast. Out with them all, no time to dawdle with that commando angrily looking on from the shelf above: already a few of the more adventurous spirits have crept forward and begin to snipe at the groups around the farms. The mealies, &c., having been flung out into a heap, a match is set to them and they flare up with a roar. Now a note is brought to the officer in charge—"Have found the women hiding in the spruit-bed." And lo! they came along

the path, a piteous, untidy procession,—women in dirty sun-bonnets, old, young, middle-aged, with children multitudinous hanging to their skirts with terrified grip. No pleasant task this. On to the waggons with them, first flinging mattresses, bedding, bundles of clothing (already packed in anticipation of a move). Now ladies, please, forgive us, it is our duty, and after all each one of you may mean another week's war if we leave you in peace, to feed those scoundrels up there on the mountains. Away we go, two waggon-loads full, full speed up the slope, with the shells singing over our heads towards the snipers, and the long whips cracking like rifle-shots. One woman secretly throws away a bit of crumpled paper. It is picked up and opened, a letter to one of the Boer officers from his wife. Listen, reader, and judge if a woman be a munition of war or no:—

"Beloved husband," it begins, "the British are in sight, and the bombs are already coming over our house. Now I know, like you, what it is to be under shell-fire. If I am taken, do not think of me; fight on to the very last, and God keep you in safety."¹

Is there nothing of nobility in this? If there be not, nobility must be but an affair of frontiers after all, not to be found beyond its political boundaries, instead of the cosmopolitan

¹ An exact translation of a letter actually dropped by a Boer woman under circumstances such as related above.

thing one has been comforted to imagine it. No wonder, with letters like this in his filthy wallet, that so many a lazy porcine Burgher has found it in his soul to forego his ignoble inclination, the *otium sine dignitate* which is so remarkably good enough for him, to set his teeth "and fight to the last."

It is now near closing-time for our Side-Show. The big arena calls two out of the four performers in it to more heroic "turns," and the other two must return whence they came, to duties even less tinselled and exciting—the dull daily round and common task of guarding the lines of communication. The mule-waggons arriving at the ridge find the "properties" already packed, and all things in order for a move. Once more then see the column on the march, baggage in front this time, stepping it out for home, pipes alight, helmets awry as before, one! two! —one! two!—as imperturbable with purpose defeated behind them as when it was unknown before them. Is not this a more unique trait than the other in the psychology of nations, and to a foe more disheartening? Curses on this wooden battering-ram of a people, they falter neither in defeat nor victory; can nothing shake them? A question asked in too many quarters not to set the cynical laughing at Peace Conferences and similar mighty hypocrisies. But the Boers, most practical of investigators, see in this

little column wending its way homewards an excellent field for experiment. It is not often that philosophers have before them the concretion of an idiosyncrasy to poke and prod at, wherein war is blessed amongst the sciences. Pursuing it no man need say, "I wonder," or "it is probable," who has two legs and arms from Heaven, and from Gehenna the paraphernalia of the science, for can he not straightway test his theories to the point of proof most positive? War is in truth a conflict between characteristics as much as between rifle and rifle,—the timid fly before the bold, the doubtful hesitate in the faces of the determined. How curious has it often been to watch these warring spirits in action, with never a shot fired from the coarser weapons, merely the shift and sway of bodies of men whose psychological armaments are meeting each other in the empty air as surely as their bodies will, when the stronger *Geist* of one side has prompted it to hurl itself upon that with the weaker.

And the Boers have a *Geist* which impels them almost irresistibly around the heels of a retreating enemy. I say "almost," for there have been occasions when the artificial spirit of discipline has put up her iron hand to bar the way, and the truer wraith has been stopped, to the great loss of its owners, as must ever be when genuine tendencies are checked in any affair of life.¹

¹ Many Boers have assured me that only the threats of their commandants kept the men in the trenches watching the British army retiring from Colenso,

But here there is nothing of this. No sooner has the rear-guard moved off than the Boers are after them, enveloping the flanks, firing from every little hollow and donga, galloping unseen to within a few hundred yards of the rearmost Britons. The latter halt and face about, there is a sharp interchange of fire, then a sudden cessation of the fusilade from the enemy's side. The Boers have no idea of being hit back, so they lie flat and wait, until reassured by the silence the infantry rise and resume their march after the column. Up get the Dutchmen again, bang! bang! bang! others canter up and the fire is redoubled. The company of the rear-guard, sorely pestered, halts again, and a message is sent forward to the field artillery. The two guns are unlimbered, and open fire over the heads of the prone men, making splendid practice, the Boer fire ceasing at the

second shell. There is another pause, then another shrapnel to make sure, and on we go again. Ten minutes later, bang! bang! bang! again from behind, and an exact repetition of the former nuisance of halting and unlimbering the guns. Three times more does this happen before the column, having crossed a drift at the foot of the ridges, enters a stretch of bare veldt where the Boers cannot follow without exposure. There have been a few casualties, a mounted infantryman killed, two others missing, but a lucky shrapnel was seen to drop two or three of the little black mounted figures who incautiously showed themselves on a ridge. Thereafter the march is unmolested, and our Side-Show, only one of hundreds of its sort, ceases to have any interest, if indeed it ever had any, with such mighty goings-on to be seen all around for the asking.

and other places. It requires no great tactical knowledge to perceive how greatly this semi-discipline of the enemy on such occasions militated against them, and in our favour.

A LANGUID SESSION AND A LIBERAL FARCE.

THE parliamentary session of 1901 opened under circumstances of a very unusual character. It is many years since, either within or without the walls of Parliament, so little interest has been excited by the progress of public affairs. Of course particular classes and particular schools of politicians have not been inattentive to the measures with which they are specially concerned. But that is a different thing. The nation at large has not once been roused to anything like a general demonstration either against or in favour of any proposed change. The political atmosphere has become almost as languid as that which was breathed by the lotus-eaters. The session has gone by like a tale that is told, and no one cares to ask his fellow what has been done or left undone. It seems as if it had only been born yesterday, and in a fortnight more it will be dead. We can recollect nothing at all like it since the days of Lord Palmerston, the difference being that what was then the quietude of satisfaction is now the lassitude of exhaustion. People cannot spare more than a certain amount of emotion for national concerns as distinct from their own, and if this is absorbed by one class of subjects it cannot be given to another. The strain on public feeling occasioned by the South African war has been very

great; and when gradually it became apparent that the nature of the struggle had changed, and that a period of great victories and great disasters—all the pomp and circumstance of war—was to end in a wearisome and monotonous guerilla contest, as the noblest river in Europe is lost eventually in swamps and ditches, a reaction set in, which spread very naturally through many other channels as well.

Then came our all-absorbing calamity—the death of the Queen; she who had been our sovereign so long that none but old men could recollect any other; who seemed a part of our national life; and one from whom we could scarcely realise the possibility of parting. These two successive drains upon those reservoirs of public feeling, which in England are but rarely drawn upon, left little for the work of legislation, which usually fills the public mind from February to August. Men's hearts were unattuned to the everyday routine of parliamentary business. We must all have experienced similar periods of depression or excitement in our private lives, when circumstances of unusual interest or moment deprived us for a time of all inclination to attend to our regular work. Such is certainly one cause to which must be attributed much of what has been called the lethargy of the session, or, in

the language of the Opposition, the lethargy of the Government. Ministers are but men; what the public in general are feeling they too must be supposed to feel. Lord Salisbury and Mr Balfour could no more be unaffected by the circumstances we have mentioned than the man in the street. We are told that the time may come when the people will look for greater vigour in legislation.¹ When that time arrives there is no reason to doubt that Government will supply the want. At present there is no popular enthusiasm to be observed about anything whatever; there is no question on which any great public meeting could be summoned, stinging speeches delivered, and strong resolutions passed amid loud acclamations. In this state of public feeling, is it fair to be constantly reproaching the Government with their want of vigour?

It scarcely lies in the mouth of the Opposition to do so; for undoubtedly when the Opposition is incapable of performing its proper functions, it is always very likely that Governments will neglect their own. Powerless Oppositions make indolent Administrations: this is an old parliamentary truth, and it has been signally exemplified during the last six months. And not only is the Cabinet itself liable to exhibit weakness under these conditions, but the rank and file of the party are apt to grow careless of their duties as well, in the face of an enemy

from whom they think they have nothing to fear, and to believe that no sacrifice can be required of them by a Government which is virtually unassailable. But Ministers themselves, and all experienced statesmen, know better. They know the bad moral effect of a close division, or perhaps even a defeat on any important question, though it may be reversed the next day; and they naturally shrink from pressing forward contentious measures at a time when they cannot rely on the daily support of their normal majority. There is a good deal therefore to be said when we hear the Government accused of weakness, and vacillation, and irresolution. They share in that reaction, and in that peculiar form of mind superinduced by such events as we have named, what the 'Daily Telegraph' calls "the public torpor"; and they are encouraged to give way to it partly by the paralysis of those whose duty it is to rouse them out of it, partly by the unsteadiness of men who become enervated with the dog-days, and, like a thirsty army when water is approached, can with difficulty be kept in their ranks.

Of the measures mentioned in the Queen's Speech three at least were of first-class importance: one because it concerned the safety of our country and our empire; another because it had been long promised, and the public, hoping that it would bring some slight relief to the overburdened ratepayer, were

¹ 'Times,' July 2 or 3.

impatient of delay; and a third because it is to the moral and material condition of the British people what the first-mentioned is to our imperial and military welfare. We refer of course to the reconstruction of the army, the Secondary Education Bill, and the promised measures for "the prevention of drunkenness"; and to these must be added the financial measures rendered necessary by our "military and naval requirements" and by the expense of the war in South Africa. It was therefore from no dearth of questions of great interest that the public displayed comparatively little curiosity with regard to what Parliament was doing. In other days the first measure in the list by itself would have been the talk of the London season. Last spring it was only a nine days' wonder. And we doubt whether, even two months ago, any one but a military expert could have given even an outline of its principal provisions. It was all the more to the credit of the Government on that account that they stood after all to have won more applause by the frankness with which they acknowledged the defects of the War Office than by the means which they have taken to repair them. As we discussed the whole subject at some length last April, we need not travel over the same ground again. Our opinion of it may be summed up in the homely old proverb that the proof of the pudding is in the eating. If under the new system we

get the men we want, well and good. The scheme looks fair enough on paper. But it is still to be regretted that the Commander-in-Chief has not been reinstated in his proper position as head of the army. His removal from it was due to the vulgarest form of Radicalism, and Conservatives ought to have restored him.

The provision made by the Chancellor of the Exchequer for meeting our increased expenditure can only be spoken of in rather blended tones. We hail the new sugar duty and the coal-tax as tantamount to an admission that we have almost reached the limits of direct taxation, and that the burden of expenditure must again be distributed over a wider area. But the grace of this admission is materially marred by an addition of twopence to the income-tax, which of course was meant as a sop to Cerberus, that is, to silence, if possible, the complaints of those fanatical economists who deprecate all taxes on articles of general consumption. Sir Michael Hicks Beach is the strongest man in the Ministry, but even he was afraid of them. We decline to congratulate him on the success of what was practically a bribe. To buy off the supporters of a bad system by a further concession to it that you may be allowed to do an honest action, which a bolder front would have enabled you to do without it, may be a convenient political contrivance, but is not a very dignified one for a Conservative Government with a majority of

a hundred and fifty. They should have raised a larger loan, and left the income-tax alone.

However, the Army Bill and the Finance Bill, taken altogether, must be regarded as good work, and quite sufficient to redeem the session from any charge of barrenness or triviality. But we are sorry that the previous coquettings of the Government with the Education question have gone so far as to compel them to give precedence to it over one of far greater urgency — namely, the temperance question. We could have waited for the other, with no great harm to anybody. But drunkenness is a great national danger, and a deadly curse, destroying the lives of both sexes, morally and physically. It is the cause of half the crime which fills our jails, and feeds the scaffold with its victims? Ignorance walks hand-in-hand with it, we grant, but not the kind of ignorance which Government Education bills attack. Against that kind of ignorance ample provision was made by Mr Forster's bill of 1870. What is the good of teaching boys and girls who have already passed out of this stage of ignorance to dally with Shakespeare and the musical glasses, if the end of it all is the public-house? Neither the country nor the boys themselves would be a penny the worse for not knowing things which will be useless to them in after-life. But they will be a great deal the worse for the formation of intemperate habits,

which may exclude them from honest work, drive them into vicious courses, and eventually land them in the dock. Against the root and foundations of this gigantic evil Government do practically nothing; while they are willing to impose grievous burdens on the whole nation in order that the children of the labouring classes may pick up a smattering of French and Latin, know the names and dates of a few great writers and a few great events, and just learn enough to make them discontented with their lot.

Of such knowledge as this the good effect, if any, very speedily evaporates, while the bad effects survive in the shape of the cravings inspired by it: the belief, namely, that they are now too "genteel" for manual labour or what not, and are bound to find some other path in life for themselves more in harmony with their literary acquirements. It is from such stuff as this that the revolutionary class in all countries is recruited; and it is to promote such dubious ends as these that the Government have neglected a duty about which there can be no two opinions. Lord Salisbury says the country is not ripe for Temperance legislation. But if we wait till it is, legislation will no longer be required. In the case of constitutional, ecclesiastical, or legal reforms, it may be well to wait till the country is ripe for them. But legislation which is intended to suppress a prevailing vice to which half the nation is addicted must

be undertaken, if it is to do any good, while the disease is still at its height. If we wait till it abates we may leave it alone altogether.

The withdrawal of the Education Bill is to be regretted for the reasons above given. The Government have talked so much about it, and laid so much stress on its importance, that its withdrawal at the eleventh hour, without any better reasons than those assigned by Mr Balfour, naturally irritates the public, and is set down as another instance of the weakness which the Government are thought to have displayed throughout the session. The character of the measure was well known. No further time was wanted for explanation; and unless there is any other reason in the background which has not yet come out, Mr Balfour must have been actuated solely by the difficulty of fighting a contentious measure through the House of Commons in the dog-days, with the possibility also of being obliged to sit into September. We are as much against prolonged sessions as either Mr Balfour or the youngest Tory member in the House can be; and we know what has often been said about important bills being forced through Parliament at the fag-end of the session, in a wearied and listless House of Commons, with the thermometer all the time standing at 80° in the shade. But there are cases in which it may be better to face all these objections rather than mortgage the time of another

session to fulfil the obligations of the current one. And our readers may remember that it was under much the same conditions that Lord Palmerston carried the Divorce Bill in 1857, one of the hottest summers we ever had; and Mr Disraeli the India Bill in 1858, a still hotter one.

So much for the dropped bill. As for the question itself, we have never been much in favour of State-aided education beyond a certain point, and in England that point has long since been passed. The only kind of ignorance which it is the duty of the State to combat is the ignorance which is dangerous to society. When it goes beyond this it exceeds its proper function; and the kind of knowledge which is thus artificially fostered in a class not fitted for the reception of it is as dangerous to society as ignorance, if not indeed a great deal more so. As we have already said, the class thus produced is the nursery of agitation in every country in Europe. In fact, the results of defective legislation on the liquor question, and of excessive legislation on the education question, come to pretty much the same thing; and the Government of this country, whether Conservative or Radical, has been guilty of both. Mr Forster's bill of 1870 did all that was necessary; and the one hopeful sign for the future is that Lord Salisbury's Government has at last mustered courage to set their foot down on the abuse of it, first publicly exposed by the Cockerton judgment. Mr Balfour's

language on this point leaves nothing to be desired. It is quite possible that the public may have to pay in the end for the same kind of education as the judgment declared to be illegal. But it is a great thing to *have* it declared to be illegal, and to have that decision indorsed by his Majesty's Government. It administers a well-earned snub to the arrogant pretensions of the School Boards, and their claims to "develop" the Act of 1870 to any extent they choose. This doctrine of development, which, under another form, is exactly the same as Newman's, required to be promptly checked. The Radical pedants who can see no salvation outside the School Board pretend that all their encroachments and usurpations were really wrapped up in Mr Forster's bill, and were necessarily part of his intention, although he didn't know it himself. Such purely technical instruction as may be demanded in the interests of our commerce and manufactures does not come within the scope of these remarks. We see no harm, but rather much good, in State schools of industry, intended to qualify our artisans for battling with foreign competition. But that is a totally different thing: that is an education obviously calculated to be of the greatest practical use to them in after-life. What is called, in the educational slang of the day, "the higher culture" is just as obviously not so.

What it *is*, may be learned at a glance from Sir John Gorst's speech on the 8th

of July. It comprises seven modern languages, Latin, English literature, music, and dancing, which last is taught under the name of "physical exercise," just as hares used to be called lions in former days on account of the game-duty. Can any one pretend to say that it was in Mr Forster's mind in 1870 that the money of the ratepayers should be danced away in this fashion? And it is not merely the girls who are trained in this branch of calisthenics. In the "higher" dancing—as we are bound to call it—boys and girls are taught together. Really the thing is too ludicrous. Even Dr Macnamara, after hearing Sir John Gorst's speech, was obliged to say that "he was sorry all this had not been told to the House before." This is what the theory of development has brought us to: and we are now told that in the original bill of 1870, when the Education rate was fixed at 3d. in the pound, lay the germs of all these additional subjects, —all the languages of modern Europe, Latin, the piano, and the polka! The Roman Catholic idea of development is nothing to this. We might just as well say that Greek iambics and the differential calculus were wrapped up in the alphabet.

The London ratepayers have long groaned under the iniquitous school board rate. But we wonder how many of them knew that this large slice taken out of their hard-earned income went to teach Tom Roberts, who ought to be working at some honest trade,

to whirl round the room in a valse with Polly Edwards, who ought to be out at service or mending the family stockings. A fit preparation this for the music-hall and the casino, but hardly for the work by which ninety-nine hundredths of the labouring classes are destined to earn their bread. We hope the Government bill of next session will set all this to rights, will separate primary and secondary schools by a clearly marked line, and will lay down some strict definition of technical instruction, declaring on what branches of it the public money may legitimately be spent and on what not. Dancing, of course, may be brought under the head of technical instruction if it is thought desirable that the youth of either sex should get their living by that accomplishment. But it is not very likely—not if they know it—that the public will allow the rates to be squandered any longer on training young women to be ballet-girls.

The gist of the one-clause bill is very easily explained. Government have determined that the School Board shall not be the authority for secondary education; and the subjects in dispute, as they belong to secondary education, are not to be left in its hands. Why should they be? Why fly in the face of the judgment of a court of law, the soundness of which nobody impugns, or introduce a partial measure on a different principle from that on which the whole scheme is to be founded. The demand is ab-

surd. But the Opposition are wild with disappointment, and feverish with spite—passions which unfortunately they have found fresh means of gratifying now that the closure has destroyed the old ones. The multiplication of useless questions, and the prolongation of sham debates on private bills, for the sole purpose of interrupting public ones, serve their purpose well enough, and may even now succeed in extending the session to September. When this sort of thing is complained of, Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman retorts that the Opposition are fenced in with barbed wire. No doubt he is quite conscious of having sat down upon it once or twice in his efforts to assert himself; and his own friends do not seem inclined to lend him any plaister. He must have injured himself seriously by his speech on the adjournment of the debate on the 17th of June.

The fate of several other Government measures is still at this moment in suspense. The Factory and Workshops Bill, the Agricultural Rating Bill, and the Education Bill will certainly be passed. The Beer Bill and the Sale of Intoxicating Liquor to Children Bill are not Government measures, but will probably become law; and a bill will have to be passed for the alteration of the King's title. The Drunkards Bill was abandoned by Mr Balfour on the 22nd of July.

We hope our readers will excuse us for having kept them waiting so long before coming

to the great event of the session, before which Education Bills and Rating Bills, and even still more important ones, fade into temporary insignificance. The split in the Liberal party *did* at last awaken the public out of their political lethargy, and they began to find during June and July that the newspapers were really worth looking at.

The "split in the Liberal party," which throughout June and more than half of July was the prominent topic of conversation in political circles, and monopolised a large share of the space at the disposal of the daily papers, began with a speech by Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman at Edinburgh on the 31st of May. In this he spoke strongly against demanding "unconditional surrender" from the Boers, and advocated on their behalf "full, free, and early self-government." A fortnight afterwards, at the Holborn Restaurant, he spoke to the same effect in still stronger terms. And on the question of adjourning the debate in the House of Commons, on June 17, he denounced the "barbarities" of which we had been guilty in no measured phrases. Well might Mr Balfour say it was not the Government who were to blame for the prolongation of the war, and the thousand miseries and burdens by which it was accompanied; but those who deliberately encouraged the Boers to persevere in a hopeless struggle, by leading them to believe that they had allies in England who would force the Government

to give in. The Boers naturally concluded that what had been done once might be done twice, and that the surrender of 1881 would probably be repeated in 1900. The memory of Majuba Hill and what followed has made the language of Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman and his followers ten thousand times more dangerous than it would have been had no such retrospect existed.

It was necessary, of course, that these disloyal and mischievous outbursts should be answered by some one of equal authority with that section of the Liberals who have given a patriotic support to the Government; and on the 20th of June Mr Asquith replied in a long and powerful speech, which so gratified the Liberal Imperialists that they resolved to give him a dinner in honour of it. He answered the invitation in a letter which was published on the 2nd of July, in which he said that "his governing aim had long been to attempt to convince the people that there is a preferable and practicable alternative to a Government with whose policy, or want of policy, a large and growing number of them are every day becoming more profoundly wearied and dissatisfied." This of course is a perfectly legitimate aspiration in Mr Asquith, which may very possibly be realised when the Liberal party has cast its slough in the shape of Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, Sir William Harcourt, and two or three more, but not

till then. In these few words Mr Asquith lays down a policy and shows us the line of cleavage between the two sections of the party with unmistakable clearness. To build up once more a united and powerful Opposition, in harmony with public opinion, and in a position to take office, whenever the wheel of time should bring round the retirement of the Conservatives, is the object which the Liberal Imperialists set before themselves. But in this design Bannerman and Harcourt and the *débris* of the old Gladstonian peace-mongers can have neither part nor parcel. The word has gone out against them, and the writing on the wall is in their own hand.

On the day following the appearance of this letter the titular leader of the party spoke again at Southampton, and Liberal Imperialists waited anxiously to see whether he would say anything calculated to bridge over the chasm which yawned between himself and Mr Asquith. They waited in vain. Either with singular maladroitness, or from sheer loss of temper, he uttered words which seem to close this chapter of our party history:—

“It has always been difficult, it is now seemingly impossible, to preserve unity, owing to the persistent schemes and efforts of a few men who, under the influence, I imagine, of some personal jealousy or antipathy of their own, are constantly and actively engaged in magnifying and embittering such differences in political opinion as exist. All I will say to-night is that it is time to be done with these practices. I shall appeal—I shall appeal to my fellow-members of the party in the House, and, if need be, beyond

them to all true Liberals throughout the country, for their support in the effort to put down this disorder and to restore efficiency to the great historical party to which we belong.”

Bravo, Bumble! These “porochial paupers” are becoming a little too insolent. This passage can never be explained away, more especially as its author took care to emphasise it at the meeting of the party which he summoned soon afterwards at the Reform Club. However, he only made matters worse, for in trying to prove that there was no great difference of opinion between the two sections, he was obliged again to fall back on these “personal antagonisms” which he said were the chief obstacles to unity. To say that there is no great difference of principle between Liberal Imperialists and their opponents is simply to ask us to disbelieve the evidence of our senses; hence these personal antagonisms have to be added to the account: and we find that the two parties are opposed to each other, not merely as political contradictories, but to a great extent also as personal enemies!

Well, the great meeting at the Reform Club, which was to set everything to rights and to proclaim the perfect confidence of the whole Liberal party in Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman’s leadership, duly came off. He had appealed to the party, and to the party he went. The solemn sham which followed has been so happily described by Lord Rosebery that little more is required to expose its true character. Sir

Henry and Sir William Harcourt made haste to exercise their boasted freedom in as marked a manner as possible. Speaking at the Eighty Club two days afterwards, Sir W. Harcourt again attacked the Government on the score of their inhumanity. And the very next day, at Pontypridd, Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman assured his hearers that the Government had "poisoned the springs of peace." He again held out strong encouragement to the Boers to prolong the war: and this only three days after the Liberal Imperialists, represented by such men as Mr Asquith and Sir Edward Grey, had proclaimed their confidence in his statesmanship, and their willingness to accept him as leader!

Lord Rosebery's letter to the City Liberal Club, published on the 16th of July, is the most important political paper which has been published in this country since the Tamworth Manifesto. Read together with Mr Asquith's letter, it lays the foundation of a new party. The utter impracticability of such a reunion of sections as the meeting at the Reform Club so gravely professed to represent is exposed by him with a cogency and conciseness as clear as a mathematical demonstration. "The Opposition in the House of Commons," he says, "has met and united or reunited on the double basis of a hearty and undisputed allegiance to its leader and a complete liberty of action and dissent on the one vital question before the

country." And he proceeds to prove that any such union, in spite of outward show, is in reality impossible. The Liberal party may continue to repeat the words "We are one," but there can be no more practical truth in them than in the celebrated "We are seven" of Wordsworth's little child.

"These," says Lord Rosebery of the party differences—"these are supreme issues: none greater ever divided two hostile parties. Politically, it is urged that this is a transient difference, and that it will cease to operate when the war is over, so that the party will then reunite without difficulty. I do not think so. Those who entertain these hopes 'know not the stomach of this people.' . . . The truth is that statesmen who dissociate themselves from the nation in a great national question, such as a war, in which all strive and suffer together, dissociate themselves for much longer than they think."

Burke knew this, if Fox did not. "Yes," said he in reply to Fox, "there is a loss of friends. I know the price of my conduct; our friendship is at an end." Statesmen who have differed from each other on such "supreme issues" as are involved in the South African war cannot sit down together again when it is all over as if nothing had happened. The same question will always be potentially before them, and any sudden accident may make it actual. They might act together in Opposition for a few years when only social questions were uppermost; for their peculiar opinions on Imperial interests might be held in reserve. But they could never form a Government. The British

Government, even in the most peaceable times, has always Imperial questions and Imperial interests on hand, which, however unobtrusive at certain intervals, may become urgent at a moment's notice. The Government of the country, if it is to command the confidence of the people, must always be prepared for such a crisis—must know its own mind, and be ready to act with decision as soon as the necessity arises. It is quite clear that a Government formed out of the two sections of the present Opposition could never answer to this description; and that therefore, as Sir Edward Grey says, it could never be intrusted with the responsibilities of an administration. The nation would never place the Empire at the mercy of a Government composed of such materials. But an Opposition which can never look forward to taking office is no Opposition at all. No Government would be afraid of it; and such conditions, if they became chronic in the House of Commons, must mean the extinction of party. Therefore, we repeat, the idea of the Liberal party again acting together as a united Opposition and fulfilling the constitutional functions which it is the business of an Opposition to discharge, is the merest illusion. It is impossible. One or other of the two sections must prevail, as Lord Rosebery says, if the Liberal Opposition is ever again to be a party in the proper sense of the word. "It cannot contain

these two schools of thought, and remain an efficient instrument."

And Lord Rosebery strengthens and indeed establishes this contention beyond the reach of cavil, by pointing out that this is not "an isolated question or a sudden cleavage. It is only one of a group; the cleavage is of long standing."

"The severance is one not simply on the war, which will terminate with the war, but a sincere, fundamental, and incurable antagonism of principle with regard to the Empire at large and our consequent policy. . . . Take, for example, Sir Wilfrid Lawson and Sir Edward Grey, both honoured names in Liberalism. Both hold with intense conviction opinions on foreign and Imperial policy which cannot by any conceivable compromise be reconciled. And yet the party is to unite on the recognition and toleration of both. The real cause, then, in my judgment, of the weakness of the Liberal party is an honest and irreconcilable division of opinion on a group of questions of the first importance. This is not the fault of any leader, nor is it in any sense a personal matter. It is the evolution of our Empire and of Imperial feeling during the past twenty years which has produced this divergence. It could not perhaps have been avoided, and it cannot now be healed, or even concealed, by a party meeting. One school or the other must prevail if the Liberal party is once more to become a force."

Lord Rosebery only laughs at Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman's petty jealousies and personal antagonism as worthy of the mind which suggested them. The comparison of the right honourable baronet to Issachar was cruel, though indeed in some sense complimentary. But Sir Henry's speeches do smack grievously of Tadpole

and Taper, and look pitiful indeed by the side of the great first principles which we are now called upon to choose between. Who is right and who is wrong in this august conflict it will be for history to decide, when the two theories can be tested by their fruits, and the mists of passion which hang over them in the immediate present shall have passed away. It may be that the Little Englanders are the prophets crying in the wilderness, "Who hath believed our report!" or they may be only the eccentric few who are always found at such times to dis sever themselves from the popular faith, in the fond belief that the people are on their side, merely because they are the noisier party of the two. If so, they have certainly on this occasion mistaken the grasshoppers for the oxen; or rather, we would say, are playing Dame Partington's part in trying to stem the tide of public feeling with that familiar article of kitchen furniture immortalised by Sydney Smith. And we prefer this metaphor, because to imagine Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman trundling a mop would be to think of the right man in the right place for once.

We see it stated that the "conscientiousness" of the anti-Imperialists will tell greatly in their favour in future; and we are informed that it was only by the respect which they gained through their opposition to the French war that the Whigs were enabled to carry out their social reforms when they came

into power. It is conveniently forgotten that if Whig principles had prevailed a hundred years ago, we should have had a French army in England, and that social reform and the British Empire would have vanished together.

Sir Edward Grey's speech at Peterborough, July 17, was only after all Lord Rosebery's in other words. He said it was necessary for the Liberal party to dispel the national mistrust of them in regard to foreign affairs before they could do any good. This is only saying that of the two sections into which they are divided one must prevail over the other. When that is done,—when the Liberal party have "peeled," and recovered their former health and strength,—then, as Sir Edward says, they may be in a position to undertake some great work, and regain their own self-respect, and the respect of the public at the same time. But this is only what Lord Rosebery says himself, and we cannot see that he was bound to go any farther. He indicated his own sense of the hopeless condition of the Liberal party when he retired from the leadership. That he had already found his personal influence unequal to the task of mending it might have been taken for granted, even had he not said so himself in his City speech on the 19th of July. The party has gone from bad to worse; and, as we gather from the whole controversy of nearly two months' duration, the cure must now be left to nature. A new Liberal party, "purged from all

anti-national elements," and rising like the phoenix from the ashes of the old one, is what both Mr Asquith and Lord Rosebery look forward to, and are willing to wait for. They added little by their last two speeches to what they had already said. It all comes to the same thing. A great career lies before the Liberal party. It has a great work to do. The people are ready to embrace it. The melting moment is at hand. Britannia is waiting to be wooed. But where is County Guy? In plain prose, this Liberal party is still only an idea. It exists as yet only in the minds of these statesmen, and, as far as we can see, there it is likely to remain. Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman will be no more inclined to surrender his freedom than Mr Asquith. The Reform Club meeting, so far from reuniting the Opposition, only stereotyped its dissensions, and postponed to the Greek kalends the restoration of Lord Rosebery's ideal, by laying down, as the only condition on which the two sections could act together, terms which make it absolutely impossible that they should ever take office. As long as both Sir Henry and Mr Asquith either sanction or connive at this "organised hypocrisy," Conservatives may sleep in peace.

This particular episode in the history of the Liberal party may now, we presume, be looked upon as closed. If the letters and the speeches, and the great meeting and the great banquet, have done little to promote the object

which writers, speakers, and diners all professed to have at heart, they have had this good effect, that we now have from the lips of the highest Liberal authorities the confession that the so-called "great Liberal party" has almost from the first been a sham. Conservative writers have frequently called it so; but in former days all such statements were drowned in the Radical bellow which followed them—the bellow of men who knew well enough that the phrase represented a lie, and were afraid it should be found out. But now at last "the time has come to speak out" and to confess the imposture. After this confession the public, perhaps, may grant them absolution and give them another chance. But this time they must take their stand upon a truth, and no longer trust to the imposing phraseology of a brilliant orator, or in their own power of throwing dust in the eyes of the public, to disguise a falsehood.

If Liberal speakers during the last six weeks have not done much for themselves, they have made up for it by abuse of their opponents. On this point they are all agreed. They liberated their minds pretty freely on the 22nd, when Mr Balfour announced the course of business for the remainder of the session, which he hoped to bring to a close by the 10th of this month. He stood to his guns, and quoted Mr Gladstone's opinion that six months was quite long enough for Parliament to sit; and so it is for everybody but a few gentle-

men who would probably like to eat, drink, and sleep there the whole year round. However, the debate on this occasion only followed the usual course. A final volley of abuse is part of the game. Let it pass. But at the close of their labours it may be well for the Government to ask themselves whether any of it is deserved. If Ministers find it necessary to keep the House sitting through August, may it not be due to waste of time or want of firmness in February and March? If so much important business is huddled together at the end of the session, would this have happened had it been pressed forward more vigorously at the beginning? Here is a bill like the Agricultural Rating Bill obliged to be brought in under the ten minutes' rule, giving the Opposition a legitimate

cause of complaint and ground for injurious imputations. We are very well aware that Ministerial carelessness has been ably supported by Liberal obstruction. But need the Government have allowed it such a measure of success? This is a question which if Mr Balfour and Lord Salisbury do not ask themselves, their followers will ask it for them. In our opening remarks we showed what allowance was to be made for the Government owing to the peculiar circumstance under which Parliament was opened, and the political apathy which prevailed in consequence. We adhere to what we then said, and let bygones be bygones. But no such excuses will exist when Parliament reassembles next spring. And we sincerely trust there will be no need for them.

BLACKWOOD'S EDINBURGH MAGAZINE.

No. MXXXI.

SEPTEMBER 1901.

VOL. CLXX.

PIANISTS OF THE PAST.

PERSONAL RECOLLECTIONS BY THE LATE CHARLES SALAMAN.

[Since this paper was written, and before he could revise it for the press, we have had to lament the death of the gifted pianist and composer, some of whose reminiscences, which link the present with the great musical figures of the past, are recorded in it.—ED. B. M.]

PROBABLY there are few living besides myself who can establish what I may call a personal link with the actual beginning of pianoforte-playing, as modern musicians understand it. I have a distinct remembrance of the great Muzio Clementi, the "Father of the Pianoforte," as he was called, the earliest of the classic composers for that instrument, and the author of that pioneer work, the 'Gradus ad Parnassum,' which laid the foundation for all subsequent study of the art.

Born in 1752, four years

before the birth of Mozart and seven before the death of Handel, Clementi was an old man of seventy-five when I saw him at a Philharmonic rehearsal at the Old Argyll Rooms on the morning of May 25, 1827. The venerable appearance and benevolent expression of the bald-headed veteran, and the deference shown to him by all in that select assembly, attracted my attention, alert with boyish enthusiasm; and great was my delight when my master, Charles Neate, whom I had accompanied to the rehearsal,

spoke to him, and then, turning to me as the old man kindly patted my head, said, "This is Muzio Clementi, a very great pianist and composer." I can well remember my excitement on learning that I was in the presence of the famous Italian musician who had practically founded and developed the art of pianoforte-playing while the harpsichord was still the instrument of general use. Keenly did I watch the aged Clementi's face as, with intense interest, and his brilliant dark eyes glistening, he followed the marvellous performance of Hummel's now cruelly-neglected Concerto in A minor by a pale-faced boy of fifteen, the afterwards world-famed Franz Liszt. Of Clementi's playing and his "pearly" touch I can only speak from hearsay, for although he lived another five years, he had given up performing in public at the time I first saw him, and I believe he afterwards played to an audience on only two special occasions. But, though I was never fortunate enough to hear the "father of the pianoforte," I have seen him seated at the instrument. His last public appearance was as conductor of the opening concert of the Philharmonic season of 1828, at the rehearsal of which I was present, and saw the grand old man for the second and last time. He sat at the piano—as conductors used to do in those days—waving his right hand rhythmically as he followed the score in front of him, while one of the first violins, acting as "leader" for the occasion, beat

the time with his violin bow—not always synchronising exactly with Clementi's wave! This practice, by the way, must have become obsolete very shortly afterwards, for certainly I remember Mendelssohn, in the following year, standing at a desk, facing the orchestra, and directing the performance with a *baton*, according to modern custom.

It is from the year 1824, however, that I date my earliest recollection of a great pianist. This was John Baptist Cramer, a pupil of Clementi, and at that period the most renowned pianoforte-player in Europe, whose ascendancy in his art few would have been bold enough to dispute. He was fifty-one years of age when, as a boy of ten, I was taken to play to him, and never shall I forget the kindly encouragement with which he listened to my juvenile efforts, and the tremendous impression he made upon me by his own playing. I remember on that occasion his recommending that I should have his "Studies,"—a recommendation which I found of infinite value, and one I would transmit to every pianoforte student, even in these days of elaborate systems of "technique" and dumb gymnastic pianos! He also advised my father to let me enter as a candidate at the approaching competitive examination for studentship at the then recently founded Royal Academy of Music; and shortly afterwards he was one of my judges, together with Sir George Smart, Cipriani Potter, and others,

though I never took advantage of my election. Of course I heard Cramer many times in those distant days, and conceived a great admiration for his purity of tone and his distinguished classical style. As a musician he was of the school of Mozart, whose compositions he constantly interpreted with true enthusiasm and perfect sympathy; and it was beautiful to hear him speak of Mozart, with whom he was contemporary for the first twenty years of his life. In appearance Cramer was dignified and elegant, with something of the look and bearing of the Kembles; and well can I recall the tranquil manner in which he displayed his mastery of the instrument, so different from the exhibitions of restless exaggeration and affectation one so often sees at the modern pianoforte recitals. It was a pleasure to watch the easy grace with which John Cramer moved his hands, with bent fingers covering the keys.

Another famous pianist I can remember as far back as 1826 was Ignace Moscheles, then thirty-two years of age, the inventor of the *bravura* style of playing, the teacher of Mendelssohn, and the friend of all the great musicians of his day. In that year I went to his residence in Upper Norton Street, Fitzroy Square, to play to him, and I recollect that, after some complimentary remarks, he warned me against flattery, and the belief that I had not still a great deal to learn — sound advice enough to a boy of twelve!

Moscheles had taken Europe by storm, and initiated his great reputation by his wonderful performance of the extraordinary *bravura* variations he had written on the popular French piece "The Fall of Paris," a copy of which he gave me, together with his "Studies," on the occasion of my first visit to him in 1826, which I still possess. So completely did this style captivate the popular taste, that he soon had a following, and became recognised as the founder of a school which continued in fashion for some years. Later on, however, Moscheles emancipated himself from the *bravura* style, which gradually played itself out, and he developed into a classical pianist and composer. I heard him often in the later twenties, the thirties, and forties, at the Philharmonic, his own and other concerts; and more than once I had the honour of appearing in the same programme with him. I always admired his masterly command of all the resources of his instrument, and the genuine art of his playing, but I confess that he seldom quite charmed me, never deeply moved me. Of course I can only record my own personal impressions, and I never remember feeling, in listening to the accomplished performances of Moscheles, that a temperament was speaking to mine through the medium of the pianoforte, as I felt with Mendelssohn, with Liszt, with Chopin, with Thalberg, and later with Rubinstein. But if Moscheles seemed to me

somewhat lacking in the power of expressing emotion, the art of the pianist was always consummate and beyond question. He was undoubtedly a master, indisputably a classic.

By the way, in 1862, just thirty-six years after I had been taken to play to Moscheles as a boy, a youth of twenty came to me with a letter of introduction and hearty commendation from the veteran in Leipzig. This was young Arthur Sullivan, who had just left the Conservatoire, bringing his beautiful "Tempest" music with him. After going to hear this at the Crystal Palace, I immediately proposed to the Council of the then flourishing Musical Society of London that we should give it at our next concert, but my suggestion was strenuously opposed. "Who is Sullivan?" they asked contemptuously. "We never heard of him." "But you will hear a good deal of him," was my reply; and I carried my point, which gave Arthur Sullivan his first public hearing in a London concert-room. I have still in my possession a letter from the brilliant and modest young composer, dated April 16, 1862, asking if there was any foundation for the rumour that his work was to be performed, and adding, "I almost fear it is too good to be true."

Another *bravura* player of European fame and popularity in the second decade of the century was Henri Herz, whom I first heard in 1828. In June of that year I had made my public *début* at a concert, and in August I visited Paris in

order to take some lessons from Herz on his own popular compositions, for the most part airs with interminable variations, some of which I was to perform in London during the next season. As the celebrated pianist was in great demand as a teacher, and his time was fully occupied, I was obliged to go to him for my lessons at his residence, No. 5 Rue de Faubourg Poissonnière, at *five o'clock* in the morning, the only hour he could possibly spare me. How I used to enjoy my walks through the silent, unpaved, though not too sweetly smelling streets of Paris at that early hour! By the way, I remember the diligence journey from Calais to Paris had occupied two days! Herz was very charming in manner and conversation, his playing wonderfully brilliant and facile in the execution of difficult passages. In his study was an eloquent testimony to his industry as an executant, in the form of a grand pianoforte, the ivory keys of which he had worn away by incessant practising! Herz came to London in 1833, and played at the Philharmonic and at one of the concerts of the Società Armonica—a charming society with an amateur element, whose concerts at the Freemason's Tavern and King's Theatre Concert Room I attended regularly. Everyone played Herz's music in those days; who plays it now?

Of a very different school was John Field, who, although an Irishman, was known as "Russian Field," from his thirty years' residence in the

land of the Czar. He was a really great player, his style, like his compositions, romantic and poetic, as if interpreting some beautiful dream, while in the singing quality of his touch, the infinite grace and delicacy of his execution, his emotional expression, he was unrivalled in his day. One might call him the forerunner of Chopin; for not only was it he who invented the Nocturne, a form of composition which Chopin out of his own poetic temperament magically developed, but the extreme refinement of expression and the magnetic charm of Field's playing were recalled to me by the playing of Chopin, as I listened to the famous Pole sixteen years later. Field was fifty years of age when I heard him in 1832 at a Philharmonic rehearsal. Many eminent musicians were present, and, owing to the European fame he had won during his long absence from England, they gave him quite an ovation, which his subsequent performance amply justified. Afterwards he dined with us at my father's house, and played exquisitely several of his own compositions, which, being things of beauty and of no fashion, are among the living classics to-day. In personal appearance Field was rather coarse and awkward looking, and in habit he was a thoroughly intemperate Bohemian; but, as a musician, the poet, the artist, the Celt in him combined to express unmistakably the man of genius. He died at Moscow in 1837.

The most eminent English pianist of those days was Charles Neate, the pupil of John Field, and of Woelfl, the confidential friend of Beethoven, many of whose works he was the means of introducing to the English musical public. As a performer he was of the classic school of John Cramer, as a teacher he was unrivalled.

It was in 1826 that I became his pupil, and we remained on terms of affectionate friendship until his death in 1877 at the great age of ninety-three. Neate understood and taught, as comparatively few teachers and performers of the present time seem to do, the great importance of a system of correct and elegant fingering. His admirable 'Essay on Fingering,' by the way, he dedicated to me in after years. His intimate personal knowledge of Beethoven and his works was of immense value to his pupils, for we thus imbibed the true traditions of the Master. When I was studying Beethoven's sonatas and concertos with Neate, he would, by practical illustration, show me how their composer himself interpreted them, giving me Beethoven's own *tempi* and ideas of expression. But, alas! how few of the true traditions find their way into the modern concert-room: a Beethoven sonata or concerto now travels by express, in accord with the general hurry of the age. Neate did not rush his pupils into the works of Beethoven, as many teachers unwisely do without measuring the intel-

lectual as well as the musical capabilities of their pupils. He gradually prepared them to appreciate the illustrious Master by a long apprenticeship in the more simple schools of pianoforte music. Countless were the talks we had about Beethoven in those early days, and innumerable the anecdotes Neate related of his friend, —anecdotes which have now become history, but at that time were intimate *causerie*, with the fascination of the personal link. How well I remember the death of Beethoven in 1827 and the universal grief, but especially the great sorrow of my master for the loss of his friend. The last anecdote of Beethoven Neate ever told me, he told me in his ninety-second year, the last time I ever saw him. He had had it from Beethoven himself, and I repeat it because it was characteristic of that extraordinary genius. "I am writing an opera," said Beethoven. "'Fidelio'?" asked Neate. "No; another opera. I had composed a song for Herr ——" (Neate had forgotten the name, but remembered he was a very distinguished vocalist); "but he did not like the song, and asked me to write another. I was very angry, but I promised, and I composed a new song. Herr —— came for it, tried it over, and took it away, apparently pleased. The next day I was as usual writing at my desk when a knock at my door disturbed me. It was Herr —— returned to say the song did not suit him. I was furious.

I threw myself on the ground, and began to kick about as if I were mad. I would listen to no argument, and vowed never to write another song for him. And when he had gone, I told my servant never to admit him again."

At Charles Neate's house in Charlotte Street, Fitzroy Square, I used to meet all the distinguished musicians of those days, and would occasionally play at his memorable quartet parties. I still have a note of invitation from him, dated June 1830, in which he says, "I shall want pianoforte-players, as I shall only have Hummel, Moscheles, Ries, and your humble servant, C. Neate." Imagine hearing intimately in a drawing-room on one and the same occasion, four such pianists as the great Johann Nepomuk Hummel, Ignace Moscheles, Charles Neate, and Ferdinand Ries, the famous pupil of Beethoven! How clearly his iron moulded face comes back to me!

Mention of Hummel reminds me of the first occasion of my hearing that great pianist and composer. This was at a Philharmonic rehearsal, in 1830, when he was welcomed with enthusiasm by the usual select assembly. His previous appearance in London had been, I believe, in 1791-92, but in the meanwhile he had become very famous. I remember going with my father to Hummel's lodgings to purchase tickets for the three concerts he was to give in the great concert room at the King's Theatre—the programmes of those concerts I have treasured

to this day. The master himself opened the door to us, without his coat or cravat—a man of ungainly and slovenly appearance, his face, if I remember rightly, pitted with the small-pox. He was then fifty-two years of age, but his coarse outward appearance was quite at variance with the refinement and elegance of his musical genius. At his first concert on April 29, 1830, he played among other things his beautiful new MS. Concerto in A flat, while each concert concluded with an amazing example of improvisation upon a theme noted down at the suggestion of one of the audience, and handed up to the pianist on the platform. I shall never forget Hummel's wonderful interpretation of his incomparable "Septuor" in D minor at the first concert. By the way, Carl Czerny told me in Vienna, in 1838, that when that great composition was first heard in the Austrian capital—in those days a great musical centre—it created such a remarkable sensation by its novelty of construction, its beauty of melody, original harmonies, and brilliancy of invention, that men would stop each other in the streets to talk about it as they would about some great national event. Hummel was a pupil of Mozart, and also of Clementi. With ease and tranquil concentrated power, with undeviating accuracy, richness of tone, and delicacy of touch, he executed passages in single and double notes and in octaves, of enormous technical difficulty. Above all, his playing possessed the indefinable quality

of charm. His pianoforte lessons were greatly in demand during his stay in London in 1830, and his terms were from two to three guineas a lesson! So great was the esteem in which Hummel was held in those days by his brother musicians, that I remember Moscheles saying to me in '26, "Whenever I hear the name of Hummel I bow my head."

More than once I have mentioned the Philharmonic rehearsals. These unique functions were held on the Saturday mornings preceding the eight annual subscription concerts, and were attended by the artists engaged, the directors of the Society, of whom there were seven, who took it in turns to conduct the concerts at a remuneration of five guineas, the members and associates, the eminent foreign musicians who happened to be in London, the leading musical critics,—Ayrton, Alsager, Hogarth, Chorley, Grüneisen, John Parry, senior, and the rest,—and a privileged few specially introduced by the directors. I was one of the last-named class until my election as associate in 1837. Among the distinguished visitors in the twenties and thirties, I particularly recall the old Duke of Cambridge, whose *obbligato* accompaniment of loud talking was often out of time and tune with the musical performance; Lord Burghersh, afterwards the Earl of Westmorland, a most accomplished musician, who founded the Royal Academy of Music; and tall John Liston, the comedian, whom Charles Lamb has so delightfully immortalised,

with his very short wife. "Of all evils he chose the least," they used to say of him.

It was at the rehearsal on May 25, 1827, already referred to as the occasion of my first seeing Clementi, and, I may add, hearing that grand singer of the great Italian school, Madame Pasta, that I saw and heard Franz Liszt for the first time, although he had played in London three years previously. "Young Liszt from Vienna," said Charles Neate to me, as the slim and rather tall boy ascended the steps leading to the platform. "He is only fifteen—a great creature!" His playing of Hummel's concerto created a profound sensation, and my enthusiastic admiration made me eager to know the wonderful young pianist, my senior by a couple of years. Very shortly afterwards—just before Liszt's morning concert, for which my father had purchased tickets from his father—we became acquainted. I visited him and his father at their lodgings in Frith Street, Soho, and young Liszt came to early family dinner at my home. He was a very charmingly natural and unaffected boy, and I have never forgotten his joyful exclamation, "Oh, gooseberry pie!" when his favourite dish was put upon the table. We had a good deal of music together on that memorable afternoon, reading several duets. Liszt played some of his recently published "*Études*," op. 6, a copy of which he gave me, and in which he wrote specially for me an amended version of the sixth study, *Molto agitato*.

In the year '28 I paid a visit to Le jeune Liszt, as he was still called, in his Paris home, where he received me with open arms. Of course I asked him to play to me, but he treated me to such an interminable prelude of scales and five-finger exercises, when I was longing to hear him interpret masterpieces in his own inimitable style, that my patience was sorely taxed. This display, however, was interesting as an example of the manner in which he was ever practising to increase that manual power and digital flexibility which made the piano keys his very slaves, to the admiration of the world. He was still unspoilt by homage and adulation, and I do not remember that he shook himself all over the piano, as he did in later days, to please the crowd.

I did not hear Liszt again until his visit to London in 1840, when he puzzled the musical public by announcing "*Pianoforte Recitals*." This now commonly accepted term had never previously been used, and people asked, "What does he mean? How can any one *recite* upon the pianoforte?" At these recitals Liszt, after performing a piece set down in his programme, would leave the platform, and, descending into the body of the room, where the benches were so arranged as to allow free locomotion, would move about among his auditors and converse with his friends, with the gracious condescension of a prince, until he felt disposed to return to the piano. The

manner of the man was very different from that of the charmingly simple boy I remembered in 1827-28; the flattery of the world had apparently not left him untouched, and he had developed many eccentricities and affectations. But as pianist the wonderful boy was father to the wonderful man; his genius had matured, and during that season of 1840 and the following, when he again visited England, he performed almost miracles upon his instrument. At the Philharmonic I remember his astounding performance, with his own variations and additions, of Weber's "Concert Stuck," Beethoven's "Kreutzer Sonata" (in association with the famous Norwegian violinist Ole Bull, a very fine player), his own "Marche Hongroise," and Hummel's "Septuor" in D minor. Yet, magnificent as was Liszt's playing, the works of such great masters as Beethoven, Weber, and Hummel needed no such embellishments as the pianist introduced. I suppose, however, that these excesses of virtuosity belonged to Liszt's flamboyant personality; his temperament compelled them. He was rarely content with the simple work of art; he must elaborate it, and "arrange" it, often indeed to extravagance. Even a fugue of Bach became more complex in his hands.

I attended all Liszt's recitals in those seasons of '40 and '41, and, among other things with which he astounded and enraptured his hearers, I have the most distinct reminiscence

of his marvellous pianoforte arrangement—a legitimate one—and performance of Beethoven's A major Symphony: it gave one the impression of being executed by at least four hands instead of two. At this time Liszt's powers as a pianist must have been at their height. The word difficult had apparently no meaning for him; he revelled in the "impossible," seeming to invent unimagined difficulties for the mere pleasure of overcoming them. He could touch the keys with gossamer lightness, or shake the grandest Broadwood or Erard with titanic power. Like all great pianists, he expressed in his playing every mood of his temperament; under his magic touch the piano became, as it were, a passionate human thing.

Great, however, as in their several ways were these famous pianists of whom I have been speaking, my memory holds in dearest affection the incomparable Felix Mendelssohn. Here was a case of artistic attraction such as I have rarely if ever experienced in a like degree. From the very first Mendelssohn realised my ideal of a musician, and although more than seventy years have passed over my head since the memorable occasion of my first seeing him and watching him conduct his own music, I retain the most vivid impression of the enthusiasm he aroused in me, and the personal spell he exercised. It was at the rehearsal for the Philharmonic concert of the 25th May 1829; Mendelssohn, just twenty years of age, had

but recently arrived in England, and when he appeared among the assembled musicians and privileged notabilities, every one was struck to admiration by his beautiful countenance beaming with intelligence, and his grace and buoyant charm of manner. He made an immediate conquest by his personality and his genius, and when he conducted the performance of his first Symphony in C minor, he was at once recognised as worthy to rank with the great Masters. I shall never forget the overwhelming applause which greeted the wonderful *Scherzo* from his string octette, which for some reason had been substituted for the minuet and trio originally composed for it: to such a pitch of enthusiasm were the performers excited, that with one accord they clamoured to be allowed to repeat it. I was also happy enough to be a witness of that memorable incident at a Philharmonic rehearsal on April 24, 1832, which Mendelssohn himself has so charmingly chronicled in one of his letters. The orchestra had just played through Beethoven's Pastoral Symphony, when Mendelssohn, who had been listening in a box, but was not expected that day, appeared in the body of the hall. "There's Mendelssohn," cried some one in the orchestra, and immediately the instrumentalists gave him an extraordinary ovation, shouting, clapping hands, and beating the backs of violins for some minutes. It was a superb welcome: one glad emotion

seemed to thrill the assembly, and Mendelssohn, pleasantly embarrassed at first, beamed with happiness as he mounted the platform and spoke a few words of gratitude. "Never can I forget it," he wrote a few days afterwards, "for it was more precious to me than any distinction, as it showed me that the musicians loved me, and rejoiced at my coming, and I cannot tell you what a glad feeling this was." Something to this effect, I remember, was his impromptu little speech on that occasion.

At the rehearsal of a later concert in that season of 1832 I first heard Mendelssohn as a pianist—the first time, in fact, that he was heard in public in this country. He gave a superb performance of his then recently written Concerto in G minor, and stirred and fascinated his hearers by his impassioned and exquisite playing, as well as by the extreme beauty of the work itself. Soon afterwards I was privileged to hear Mendelssohn play part of this Concerto in private. This was at one of Charles Neate's quartet parties on a summer afternoon. It was an unusually numerous gathering, including several of the most distinguished foreign and native musicians then in London. Moscheles was there, I remember, and John Field; Cipriani Potter, the celebrated and much admired pianist and composer, who in that year succeeded Dr Crotch, my old harmony-master, as Principal of the Royal Academy of Music; also Neate's crony and angling companion, George

Eugene Griffin, another esteemed English pianist and composer of the good old school, whose Concerto, played by every one in those days, was then perhaps the most financially profitable composition of that class yet published. Above all, there was Mendelssohn. I forget who was the leader of the quartet on that occasion, — I only remember that the versatile Mendelssohn played the viola, and Neate the violoncello, on which he was almost as excellent a performer as on the pianoforte. I can see Mendelssohn before me now, fiddling with keen enjoyment. After the quartet he was begged to play a part of his G minor Concerto, which, since its triumph at the Philharmonic, had been the musical topic of the hour. He acquiesced with his usual amiability, and at once sat down to the piano. I remember standing close behind him, all eyes and ears for my musical hero. In that sympathetic company he played like one inspired, and simply electrified all present. He was overwhelmed with applause and congratulations. I was almost breathless with excitement. It thrills me even now as I recall the incident. Almost seventy years ago! I heard Mendelssohn play his Concerto once again in public that same season, at the Philharmonic, and I am proud to say that I was the first, after the composer himself, to perform this immortal work. It was at the first of my series of annual orchestral concerts on May 30, 1833, and

as the band parts were not yet printed, Cramer lent me the MSS. which had been used at the Philharmonic. I remember Moscheles came to hear it.

That year was also specially memorable to me for the beginning of my acquaintance with Mendelssohn, whom of course I was longing to know personally. It was at the Philharmonic, and he had just finished playing Mozart's Concerto in D minor, into which he introduced his own impromptu cadences, conceived with fine taste and sympathy, splendid invention, and masterly skill. I was still spell-bound by the inexpressible charm of the pianist, when that fine old musician, Thomas Attwood, the favourite pupil of Mozart, and organist of St Paul's Cathedral, knowing my intense admiration for Mendelssohn, led me up to the Master, and presented me to him as the young pianist who was, in a few days from then, to perform his G minor Concerto. The simple charm and easy cordiality of his manner, his graceful modesty in face of my obvious homage, quite captivated me. Shortly after this I had a very agreeable surprise. Sometimes Neate and I would play duets for pianoforte and cello, and one evening at his house, after playing Beethoven's Sonatas in G minor and F, Neate, saying "Now for a contrast!" took up a concertante duo by Bochs and Dupont, a light but elegant thing, and suggested that we should run through it. We were in

the midst of it, without much enthusiasm, when we were startled by a loud double knock. "A visitor," cried Neate, "who can it be?" The door opened, "Mr Mendelssohn," said the servant. "Oh, he mustn't find us playing such music," said my old master as he flung the copies into a corner. Mendelssohn's entrance brought charm at once into the room. He seemed pleased with Neate's hearty welcome, laughed over his confession about the Bochsá music, and was soon at home with us, chatting familiarly on a variety of subjects, of both passing and enduring interest. How delightful was his talk, whatever the topic, how animated his manner, how fascinating his smile as the playful mood danced over the earnest thought! He seemed to understand everything, and to feel rightly about everything, to be so wise in his enjoyment of life. We had no music during the hour or so that Mendelssohn remained with us. His talk had melodies of its own.

It was not till the year 1842 that I again saw and heard Mendelssohn. Hitherto he had conducted only his own works at the Philharmonic, but this season, at the seventh concert I think it was, he appeared for the first time as conductor of an entire concert. That occasion was specially memorable for the first performance of his *Symphony in A minor*—the famous "*Scotch Symphony*." There was an unusually brilliant audience, and when Mendelssohn took his place at the conductor's desk that evening, he was

accorded a welcome such as a victorious general, even the Duke of Wellington himself, who was present, might have been proud of, while the enthusiasm after the *Symphony* was immense. I was at both the rehearsal and the concert, and, sitting in my usual place on a side bench near the orchestra, was able to observe the expression of Mendelssohn's face, constantly changing according to the manner in which the orchestra satisfied him in the interpretation of his work. His face was always a study when he was conducting, it reflected so perfectly the play of his emotions. Mendelssohn was a wonderful conductor—the joyous magnetism of his nature seemed to hold the orchestra in thrall. He inspired such confidence, he could do absolutely what he liked with it, making it play as perhaps no orchestra had ever played before. At rehearsals he would take infinite pains to make the performers at one with him in the interpretation of a work. He flashed his intelligence like a search-light over the orchestra, and so acutely sensitive was his ear that often he would have a passage repeated again and again when to the expert ear it seemed already perfect. He could be content with nothing less than his own ideal of perfection. Perhaps the violins did not entirely satisfy him in their shading of a passage, after several repetitions; then he would leave his place and go to Mori and Spagnoletti or François Cramer and Weichsel at their desks and discuss the

passage animatedly with them ; and so to Nicholson or Willman, if the flutes or clarionets fell short of his ideal by the breath of a tone ; or to Mariotti, who led the trombones, or to Platt, the horn leader, or Harper, the trumpeter, or Sherrington, leading the violins, or Grattan Cooke, the irrepressibly facetious, who, in his pathetic oboe's intervals of rest, would dash off funny caricatures. With Cooke, Mendelssohn, who loved fun, would occasionally relax his artistic earnestness to exchange witticisms, but he could be very sarcastic when he chose. Towards the veterans Lindley and Dragonetti, the Damon and Pythias of the concert-world, however, he invariably showed a tactful deference, even when at issue with them, which was seldom, for they were great artists. What a superb body of instrumentalists was the Philharmonic orchestra of those days ! It was unique then, and I doubt if it has been surpassed, if equalled. One instance of Mendelssohn's extraordinary power over the orchestra I particularly recall. He was conducting a rehearsal of Weber's Jubilee Overture, and had, perhaps intentionally, allowed the players to lapse into comparative tameness. Suddenly, as if by magic, with amazing energy, he seemed to inspire them with his own awakened enthusiasm, so that, roused to a pitch of artistic excitement, they played with such accumulating vigour and brilliancy, and such a unity of effect, that we in the auditorium, quite electrified, having

risen at the National Anthem, with which the overture concludes, instead of resuming our seats, remained standing and applauding for some minutes. This was in 1844, a very memorable Mendelssohn year. Most interesting to me also in that year was the Master's rehearsal of his "Erste Walpurgis Nacht," which I heard also on its first public performance at the concert. At the rehearsal, however, I felt on more intimate terms with that great work, for there was Mendelssohn interpolating his directions and suggestions to the performers ; and I shall never forget how the musicians themselves applauded the almost whispered chorus, "Disperse, ye gallant men," and the tremendous chorus, "Come with torches brightly flashing." How we all congratulated Mendelssohn, and how unaffectedly he showed his pleasure !

One other memory of Mendelssohn as a conductor. It was at the fifth concert of the season 1844, the same at which we heard for the first time the hitherto unperformed portions of the exquisite "Midsummer Night's Dream" music. Mendelssohn was conducting a performance of Beethoven's violin concerto, and the violinist was Joseph Joachim, then a wonderful boy of thirteen, making his first important appearance in the concert world of London. During that marvellous display of youthful genius Mendelssohn's countenance was a joy to watch. Where I was sitting I could note his frequent bright smiles of ap-

proval; and among my musical memories no incident is more fragrant than that of the immortal Mendelssohn patting on his back and shaking heartily by the hand the boy Joachim, who was to become the master violinist of his age.

But to return to Mendelssohn as a pianist. I remember vividly his playing his own D minor Concerto at the Philharmonic on June 21, 1842, when also he conducted his "Hebrides" overture. He played the lovely slow movement with intense passion, and the joyous rondo with fairy-like lightness and rapidity, but with unerring accuracy. The applause which followed was extraordinary: Mendelssohn himself has described how "they clapped their hands and stamped for at least ten minutes." It was an exceptional privilege to hear Mendelssohn interpret Beethoven. I remember his playing Beethoven's Concerto in G with an impromptu cadence, which he varied each of the three or four times that he tried it over with the orchestra at the rehearsal, so inexhaustible was his improvisation. A more reverential, sympathetic, and conservative reading of the older master's text I have never heard, while at the same time the interpretation was unmistakably individual, — Mendelssohn's, and no possible other's! His touch was exquisitely delicate, and the fairy fancies of his "Midsummer Night's Dream" music seemed ever to haunt him in

his playing, lending it a magic charm. His "Lieder ohne Worte" (the first edition of which, published at his own expense, I still treasure) were rightly named, for, as he played them, those beautiful pieces were veritable songs that his fingers sang as they rippled over the key-board. He never invented passages for the purpose of developing technical difficulties, although his own manual agility was remarkable. His fugue playing was strictly classical, and based on Bach; his handling of octave passages was magnificent, and, as I have said, his power of improvisation boundless. To exemplify this, I recall an interesting incident at a morning concert, given in June 1844, in honour of that gifted and most pathetic of famous violinists, Heinrich Ernst. Bach's triple Concerto in D minor was played by Moscheles, Thalberg, and Mendelssohn — what a trio of giants! and each performer was to play an impromptu cadence. Moscheles, a famous improvisatore, led off with a fine cadence. Thalberg followed with perhaps even more brilliant effect. Then Mendelssohn, who had been leaning listlessly over the back of his chair while the others were playing, quietly began his cadence, taking up the threads from the subjects of the Concerto; then, suddenly rousing himself, he wound up with a wonderful shower of octaves, indescribable in effect, and never to be forgotten. The audience was so excited that the applause

at the end was all for Mendelssohn. At Ernst's second concert in July the Concerto was repeated, but Thalberg's place was taken by another pianist eminent in those days, Theodor Döhler, a pupil of Czerny, and a brilliant follower of Thalberg. After Moscheles and Döhler had played their cadences, we expected a repetition of Mendelssohn's amazing performance at the previous concert. But it was not to be. When the pause came he played a simple shake in the dominant, and concluded with a few chords.

The last time I met Mendelssohn was in 1844, at a *conversazione* of the British and Foreign Institute, when I enjoyed a pleasant chat with him. We had hoped that he would play that evening, but, unfortunately, dear old Silk Buckingham, the traveller and first editor of the '*Athenæum*,' who had founded the Institute, was, according to his wont, filling up the time with one of his interesting but long-winded extempore discourses, and nobody had the courage to interrupt him; so Mendelssohn, who had other engagements that evening, good-humouredly waited as long as he could, and then left, begging me to make his apologies. Naturally the company was disappointed when it heard that Mendelssohn had come and gone while Silk Buckingham would "still be talking." The next time Mendelssohn was in London I was in Italy, and in that year, 1847, he died. And nowadays my memories of Felix Mendelssohn

help with their fragrance to sweeten my old age.

After Mendelssohn it seems natural to speak of William Sterndale Bennett, our greatest English composer of instrumental music, and one whom even musically exclusive Germany has delighted to honour. I first remember him as a youth, not yet nineteen years of age, conducting an MS. Symphony in A of his own at a concert of the then recently founded Society of British Musicians, of which most of the budding, as well as matured, native composers of the day were members. This was on January 5, 1835, and the concert was under the "immediate patronage of the King, William IV., and the Princess Victoria." Besides Bennett's Symphony, the new works included a *Scena* from the gifted John Barnett's beautiful opera, "*The Mountain Sylph*," a *scena* of my own, and an MS. overture, "*The Merchant of Venice*," by George Alexander Macfarren, then a brilliant young man of twenty-one, destined to fame and honour, whose close friendship I enjoyed from 1833 until his death in 1887.

I made young Bennett's personal acquaintance in connection with this long since defunct society, devoted at first to the exclusive performance of the works of native composers; and, later in that year, 1835, I was present at his memorable *début* as a pianist at the Philharmonic, when he played his beautiful Concerto in E flat. At the rehearsal he

had been very warmly received, and the members of the orchestra themselves demonstrated their appreciation and sympathy in a marked way, the young musician's boyish appearance and modest manner enhancing the general interest in his remarkable achievement. A Philharmonic rehearsal in those days, owing to the select and critical audience, was no light ordeal for a *débutant*, but Bennett passed through it with flying colours. At the concert itself his splendid performance was greeted with vociferous applause. He was at once recognised as a musician of most promising genius, whose Concerto was a masterly work in the classic school of Mozart and Hummel, yet thoroughly individual, while its rendition revealed him a pianist of a very high order. While he had imbibed the best traditions from his master, Cipriani Potter, he seemed to me to have formed his style of playing on that of John Cramer: it was, therefore, like his music, pure and classic, with all the grace, refinement, and tenderness inherent in his nature. He had considerable powers of technical accomplishment, and his touch was most clear and delicate. People talked of him as a "second Mendelssohn," but he stood by himself, an English musician of original and classic genius. Bennett's fame grew steadily, but added distinction—university professorship, honorary degrees, knighthood—made no difference in his simple, unassuming manner. Conductor of the Philharmonic

for many years, and a frequent concert-giver, he was an assiduous and excellent teacher of the pianoforte, while his academic influence was exerted always for the good of the musical art in this country. Bennett was ever a busy worker. I have a letter from him, dated August 28, 1848, in which he said he had "scarcely ten minutes in a week" for his own pleasure. I met him for the last time a few weeks before his death, and it pained me to find my old friend so feeble and shaky. Representing the Royal Society of Musicians, I followed him to his grave in Westminster Abbey on February 6, 1875, and felt that Sterndale Bennett was worthy to lie beside Purcell and Handel.

Back again to the thirties, to summon my reminiscences of Sigismund Thalberg, one of the most charming musicians I have ever known, one of the greatest pianists I have ever heard. It was in '36 I became acquainted with him, the year he came over to astonish and delight the expectant London public, already roused to curiosity by the reports which had travelled from the Continent of the striking individuality and extraordinary powers of the new pianist. His popularity in this country was soon assured, and he and his music became the fashion. Handsome, talented, brilliant, Thalberg was the musical lion of that season, and he supported the position with unflinching personal charm, and without affectation of any kind. The natural son of a prince, he had

that simple and unassuming courtliness and dignity of manner one associates with the idea of a prince, together with the natural *bonhomie* and magnetic sympathy of the artist. I shall never forget how, one night in the summer of 1836, at a jolly gathering of artists at the house of a common friend, when dancing was proposed, Thalberg, without any assumption of the celebrated *virtuoso*, genially sat down at the piano to play the dance music — together with De Beriot, a prince among violinists. That occasion is particularly impressed upon my memory, because I had the pleasure of dancing, to such unusual musical accompaniment, a quadrille with that most exquisite of singers and most fascinating of women, Maria Malibran, whom, as Maria Garcia, a *débutante* of seventeen, I had first seen and adored in Meyerbeer's "Il Crociato in Egitto" on my earliest visit to the opera in 1825. Alas! before the end of the year my gifted partner in that memorable quadrille was dead.

I saw a good deal of Thalberg in London in 1836, and conceived a great admiration for his talents and his personality. Consequently, when in October 1838, after a month's sojourn in Munich, — where, by the way, at the Königl. Hof und National Theater, I had played before the King of Bavaria, in addition to Mendelssohn's G minor Concerto, Thalberg's "Les Huguenots" Fantasia,

— I made my pilgrimage from the Bavarian capital to musical Vienna — three days and nights' constant *eilwagen* travelling in those days — I was glad to fulfil a promise to visit Thalberg. He was then living at the palace of his father, Prince Moritz Dietrichstein, in the Währinger-Gasse; and I remember that the Hausmeister, a most imposing person, almost made me tremble when, on my innocently inquiring for "Herr Thalberg," he thundered out the correction, "Herr von Thalberg," and gave me a look of withering contempt for my ignorance, — an incident that tickled the humour of his master when I related it. I found Thalberg at his piano, an Erard grand, and most genial and charming was the welcome he gave me. After a delightful chat, I drew him again to the piano, and he played to me as only Thalberg could play. He was thoroughly in the mood, and gave me of his very best. Besides several compositions that were familiar to me, he played some new Studies, and a charming Nocturne he had just written, a copy of which he presented to me with a friendly inscription. I found these new works as brilliant and melodious as the earlier ones, and as strongly marked with those special characteristics which belonged to Thalberg's individuality. Perhaps brilliancy and elegance were his chief distinguishing qualities, but, of course, he had much more than these. He had deep

feeling. This I particularly realised that day I spent with Thalberg in Vienna. His playing quite enchanted me; his highly cultivated touch expressed the richest vocal tone, while his powers of execution were marvellous. Nothing seemed difficult to him; like Liszt, he could play the apparently impossible, but, unlike Liszt, he never indulged in any affectation or extravagance of manner in achieving his mechanical triumphs on the key-board. His strength and flexibility of wrist and finger were amazing, but he always tempered strength with delicacy. His loudest fortissimos were never noisy. His own compositions, which he chiefly played in public, enabled him best to display his astonishing virtuosity, but to be assured that Thalberg was a really great player was to hear him interpret Beethoven, which he did finely, classically, and without any attempt to embellish the work of the master. Of course I was full of Beethoven in Vienna, and Thalberg sympathetically humoured me. When we had had our full of music, Thalberg suggested a stroll through the city, and a most delightful and instructive cicerone he proved, full of interesting anecdote and information. I considered myself lucky to be introduced to Vienna by so congenial and cultured a companion.

It is, I believe, the fashion nowadays to speak of Thalberg as an overrated composer, and even to question his claim

to the highest rank as a pianist. But, though Chopin in his own day, ignoring their intrinsic merits, may have regarded Thalberg's compositions as "mere virtuoso music," Mendelssohn, on the other hand, had a most sympathetic admiration for him as a composer and executant. And, after all, Chopin, it is said, felt coldly towards the piano-forte works of the great Schumann! I remember the late Prince Consort, one of the most accomplished musical amateurs I have ever met, a charming pianist, and a critic of fine taste, asking me, one morning at Buckingham Palace in 1841, while I was still at the piano, if I played Thalberg's music, and on my responding with the Nocturne in D flat, the Prince spoke most enthusiastically of the composer and his wonderful playing. Next time I met Thalberg I pleased him greatly by telling him this. He was one of those who *did* put his trust in princes—when they knew what they were talking about.

But let me return to Vienna in 1838. In those days it was a kind of musical Mecca, still redolent of personal associations with the great prophets of music, Mozart and Haydn, Beethoven and Schubert. The very first acquaintance I made there, on the day of my arrival, was Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, the second son of the immortal composer. I had brought him a letter from his venerable mother—the "dear Constance," whom Mozart had so passionately loved, and who now, a widow for the second time, and nearly eighty years

of age, was living with her sister, like herself a short, thin, but very bright and active old lady, at Salzburg. I had been recently visiting her, and revelling, with a peculiarly sentimental fascination, in her reminiscences of her illustrious first husband—a second, after *such* a first, rather stuck in my throat!—and her cousin, the immortal Carl Maria von Weber. I still preserve the words Mozart's widow wrote in shaky manuscript in my diary. Her son called on me in the morning at the Hotel Stadt Frankfurt, and I must confess I experienced a thrill when his familiar name was announced. A middle-aged, shabbily dressed man presented himself, and I need hardly say that the son of Mozart received an almost reverential greeting at my hands. But he was a disappointing person: his musical talents were not of a very high order, yet, bearing the illustrious name he did, much more was expected of him, and his career was accordingly unsuccessful. In my enthusiasm I said to him, "How proud you must be to be called Mozart!" But his answer disillusioned me. "Well, it has been rather an injury to me." It was a bitter truth. If the son had not been a musician, the father's fame would have been a glorious legacy: as it was, it overwhelmed him.

A few days after this meeting I was invited to meet Robert Schumann at dinner at the house of Johann Baptist Streicher, the famous maker of pianofortes. Schumann,

who was then twenty-eight years of age, had just arrived at Vienna from Leipzig, and was lodging in the *Schonlatern-Gasse*. He was in hopes of finding in the Austrian capital a wider appreciation for his critical journal, the '*Neue Zeitschrift für Musik*'; his musical compositions were not at that time very widely known, and he had not yet been recognised as one of the greatest and most original of creative musicians.

The dinner at the Streichers' was of an unceremonious character, early in the afternoon. We were a small and select party; Mozart's son was also present. Schumann appeared shy and reserved, as I believe he always did in company, and I do not recall anything specially remarkable in his conversation to indicate the man of genius; though I fancied that in such a clever-looking head there must be "that within which passeth show." Mozart's son was certainly not brilliant as a talker, and he impressed me, more even than when we were alone together, as an unhappy discontented man. Schumann and I had some sympathetic chat about our mutual friend, Sterndale Bennett, whose gifts he admired, and whom he had just left, studying and writing hard, at Leipzig. The general talk turned chiefly, as far as I remember, upon Schumann's musical journal and its chances in Vienna, the vagaries of popular taste, and the difference in the mechanism of Viennese pianos from that of instru-

ments made in London and Paris, the former being much easier to play upon. This conversation led to an adjournment to the pianoforte saloon, where we were shown several fine new instruments, and it was suggested by Streicher that Schumann, Mozart, and I should each select one of these, and severally improvise upon a given theme. I proposed Haydn's "God Preserve the Emperor," the national hymn of Austria, and in the best of humours we three sat down at the pianos we had chosen. Schumann, who had by this time thrown off something of his reserve, fell in with the playful spirit of the experiment, and began the performance with the melody pure and simple, afterwards executing an extempore variation. Mozart and I followed with our impromptus; then we three played the glorious tune in concert, indulging in variations *ad libitum*. After this irregular trio, we were each called upon for a solo. Schumann played an unpublished study of his own; but, although the composition and its interpretation interested me, I cannot remember in his playing any special quality of touch or other characteristic, even allowing for the injury to the third finger of his right hand, which had caused him some years before to relinquish the hope of making a career as a public pianist.

Another interview of special interest to me during my visit to Vienna in 1838 was with the kindly and much esteemed

Carl Czerny, whose music I had often played in public, and whose acquaintance I had made during his stay in London the previous year. I called on him one day, and found him with a black skull-cap on his head, standing, pen in hand, at a high desk on which was a copious supply of music paper, a good deal of it already covered with his manuscript. But busy as he evidently was, he readily left his work to greet me, and we were soon deep in talk. One who had been the pupil of Beethoven, and experienced the almost paternal affection of that great man, had studied with Hummel and with Clementi, and been the teacher of Liszt, was indeed a man worth listening to. He talked of Hummel, and a great deal of Beethoven and of his wonderful powers of improvisation and the effects he could produce by it; while, going to his piano, Czerny gave me several illustrations of the master's readings of his own works. This was a special pleasure to me and a valuable one. Although Czerny had long given up performing in public, it was most gratifying to me to hear him touch the instrument the resources of which his method of teaching, evolved from the principles of Clementi, had done, and was yet to do, so much to develop. Czerny's countless compositions and arrangements, fashionable as they were in those days, have long since lost their vogue, but his "Exercises" must go to the making of every pianist, for they show the way to the true *technique* of piano-

forte playing. Czerny was the busiest of musicians, for, in addition to his constant labours as a teacher, he was the most prolific producer of almost every kind of music for the popular market. By incessant practice he had acquired an extraordinary rapidity of composition, and he could write music as fast as he could conceive it. I have before me now an MS. Andante in D flat, covering ten lines of music paper, which he wrote impromptu for me in seven minutes! I timed him with my watch as he was doing it, and it is quite a graceful *morceau*. He inscribed this: "Mr Salaman, Esq., by Charles Czerny," and it is dated Friday 5th of October 1838, Vienna."

And now a jump of ten years brings me to my meeting with the great and lovable Frederic Chopin, and the only occasion on which it was my good fortune to hear that inspired composer and enchanting pianist. This was on June 15, 1848, when Chopin, who was then visiting London, gave a *matinée musicale* at 99 Eaton Place, the house of my friend Mrs Sartoris—the brilliant Adelaide Kemble, whose charming society I had lately been enjoying during my residence in Rome. At that time Chopin's music, now at the mercy of every schoolgirl, was not very much known in England. It was rarely heard in a concert-room,—indeed it was only five years before that a piece of his first appeared in a public programme in London. How vividly I recall his slight feeble figure at the piano, and his long

thin fingers as they moved over the key-board! His pale, interesting face bore unmistakable signs of the illness which for so many years had been wearing his life away, and was to kill him in the following year; but, when he began playing, there was no longer the look of the suffering invalid, for the expression quickly changed, and I only saw the dreamer, the lover, the poet, the artist, for I was hearing all four. I retain a very live impression of the most delicate and refined touch, and perfectly exquisite expression, for Chopin was not merely a dreamer of dreams and a creature of romantic fancy and emotion, but a sincere artist, with whom the right, the exact, form of expression was as important as the feeling or idea to be expressed. I was spell-bound by the wizard power of Chopin over mind as well as feeling. On the occasion of which I speak he performed exclusively his own music—some of the Nocturnes, Mazurkas, and Études, the lovely "Berceuse," and, I particularly recall, the Waltz in D flat. In spite of all I had heard of Chopin's *tempo rubato*, I still recollect noting how precise he was in the matter of time, accent, and rhythm, even when playing most passionately, fancifully, and rhapsodically. After the performance I was presented to Chopin, but he appeared so thoroughly exhausted that, with a few words of enthusiastic appreciation and sympathy, I thought it kinder to leave him. Talking seemed a painful effort to him, and his feebleness was

so obvious that I could quite understand his having to be carried up and down the stairs. However, I bore away with me an indelible impression of one of the most lovable and romantic figures in the history of music, and certainly one of the most original geniuses.

Another of the creative pianists whose memory lives charmingly with me was Stephen Heller, whose acquaintance, however, I did not make until a much later date. This was the Exhibition year, '62, when he came over from Paris on a visit to London. We met first in the shop of one of the music publishers—I forget which—and at once the chord of sympathy was struck between us. I recall Heller as a tall thin man of distinguished appearance, nearing fifty years of age, with a serious, rather sad, expression of face, and a gentle, genial manner, whose unaffected conversation revealed wide culture and a simple, sympathetic, and highly sensitive nature. He was, in fact, a genuine artist and a true gentleman. When I visited him at his lodgings, 1 Upper James Street, Golden Square, we soon found ourselves at the piano, exchanging musical confidences. Heller played with a delicious touch and rare sensibility some of his own compositions, of which I had always been a practical admirer, and then he pressed me to take his place at the instrument and respond with some of my own pieces. He could not stand the bustle of London life—he was too sensitive for it. Stephen

Heller's retiring nature caused him at that period rather to shrink from public performance as a pianist, and his appearances at concerts in that capacity were comparatively few and far between. A very pleasant memory always for me, therefore, will be his cordial acceptance of my proposal that he should play, together with Charles Hallé, Mozart's Concerto in E flat for two pianos, at the Musical Society of London's concert on April 30, 1862. It was a truly classic performance, and one not easy to forget. The charming cadences in the Allegro and Finale were of Heller's composing. Hallé's playing, usually rather cold in its classical purity and accuracy, seemed to borrow some of Stephen Heller's warmth and sympathy, and to be the richer for the loan. Hallé always finely understood the musical classics, if he did not always seem to show that he felt them through his temperament. The rehearsal for this concert was memorable for the presence of the veteran Meyerbeer, who came specially to hear the rehearsing of the "Pietà" from his opera "Le Prophète," and was in a charming mood. We had quite a galaxy of eminent musicians in London that season of 1862. Besides Meyerbeer and Stephen Heller, I remember there were Verdi and Thalberg, and, I think, Auber.

I have always considered Ferdinand Hiller the last of the great German classic school of pianists and composers. He was the pupil of Hummel, and,

as a boy of sixteen, I believe he, in company with his master, saw Beethoven on his death-bed, when the feud between those two musical giants was pathetically ended. What an incident for an impressionable boy to remember all his life! I had first heard Hiller at the Philharmonic about 1852 or 1853, and had corresponded with him in the early sixties, when I arranged for the first performance of his *Symphony in E minor*, which he dedicated to the Musical Society of London, but I did not make his personal acquaintance until '71, when he came to London and gave some concerts. He was a stout little man, with a fine intellectual head, and, even if I had not been convinced of it through his works, I think I should have recognised him for a great man. Apart from his musical genius and fine culture, moreover, he was to me a specially interesting personality on account of his intimate friendship with Mendelssohn, Schumann, Spohr, and Chopin, about whom we would compare personal notes. I found his conversation thoroughly congenial, while on musical matters we were quite in sympathy. Conservative of the best traditions inherited direct from the masters, he was yet justly accessible to claims of novelty and originality as long as these were not at variance with the classic principles of the musical art. Too intellectual to be superficially impressionable, Hiller had a high ideal of beauty, with a classic standard of accomplishment, and, remember-

ing his dislike of the merely clever, and the horror of the ugly, I can fancy how he would writhe at the ingenious cacophonies achieved by some of the very modern composers in their struggles for novelty. Ferdinand Hiller's pianoforte playing had exquisite delicacy and the special charm of a pure legato style. His rendering of a fine Concerto of his own was quite in the grand manner of his master, Hummel, while nothing could have been more delicate than his playing of his elegant "*Ghasiles*," or more charming in its variety of significance than his performance of his delightful duet series, the "*Operetta ohne Text*,"—this with, I think, Madame Schumann, though I cannot be sure. However, I played the "*Operetta*" with him subsequently in private, and greatly enjoyed his companionship on the key-board. Whether at the piano or in conversation, Ferdinand Hiller had the art of making you feel he was a comrade.

Genuine artistic sympathy is as precious as it is rare. In the impressionable years of youth we think we find it often; in our maturer years it becomes rarer and rarer to seek. I found this sympathy with Ferdinand Hiller as I had found it with Charles Gounod the very first time we met, when, as afterwards he often did, Gounod charmed me by the delicate expression of his playing, and also his singing, with sweet small voice, various compositions of his own. Gounod's was a temperament full of sensibility and emotion.

As an illustration of our artistic sympathy, I remember one day sitting at a concert or rehearsal with Gounod, who was feeling ill and out of spirits. We were enjoying the performance of some orchestral music of his own—I fancy it was his lovely “Jeanne d’Arc” incidental music—when suddenly Gounod slipped his hand into mine, just as a girl might impulsively slip her hand into her lover’s, moved by the influence of some romantic scene; and there we sat, hand in hand, two elderly men, linked by the appeal of a beautiful work of art.

But now I must be brief, although I still would gladly speak of several admirable pianists, eminent in their day—Pixis, Madame Dulcken, Jacques Rosenhain, Mrs Anderson, Dreyshock, Jaell, Arabella Goddard, Madame Pleyel, Lindsay Sloper, Julius Benedict, and witty and talented George Osborne, my dear friend for sixty-five years.

But I have yet to name, more eminent than all these, the great Clara Schumann and the great Anton Rubinstein. I met and heard both for the first time in the later fifties—Madame Schumann at a recital she gave at the Hanover Square Rooms in ’56, and Rubinstein at some private theatricals at George Osborne’s, when the famous pianist good-naturedly played the overture and *entr’acte* music behind the scenes. The

last time I heard Rubinstein, his exquisitely toned playing of a lovely *andante* was but faintly applauded, while a noisy ovation greeted him after he had thundered out some brilliant show piece, in the course of which the passionate energy of his virtuosity had urged his body into a paroxysm, and caused his long hair to fly wildly about, after the fashion of his idol Liszt. When Thalberg, with amazing skill, made a hurricane of *arpeggios* sweep over the key-board, he never lost in the effort his tranquil ease of manner, he never turned a hair!

Laudator temporis acti?

Well, why not? Do we not all look back with regretful reverence to the days “when Plancus was Consul”? At eighty-six I cherish with peculiar tenderness the memory of my early enthusiasms and ideals, and if, as I grow older, I find it less easy to acquiesce in every new hero-worship, perhaps the very remembrance of the great ones of the past enables me the more truly to “love the highest when I see it.” I think I revere and admire Henry Irving all the more as I recall my boyhood’s histrionic idol, Edmund Kean; and so, remembering all the great pianists from the days of Clementi, Hummel, and John Cramer helps me to a juster appreciation, maybe, of the Pachmann and Paderewski of to-day.

WITH THE PILCHARD FLEET.

LOOE, during half the year, lives by pilchard, thrives by pilchard, speaks of pilchard, reeks of pilchard, thinks of pilchard, stinks of pilchard. In the forenoon the quays are very quiet: perhaps a few men at work on a small collier schooner that lies unloading; down at the ferry a group of watermen with their boats on the watch for seaside visitors who want a trip on the water, or a couple of hours pollock-fishing. But the fishermen proper, who are the life and soul of Looe, keep the same hours as Fleet Street—or may be a trifle later. Early in the afternoon a stir begins; hardy-looking bearded fellows, boys with young faces already weatherbeaten, come and go on the quays with the slow walk of seafaring people; you see them drop quietly and without fuss into the small gigs heaped high with empty baskets, and slip gently down the river and out to where the boats lie moored in a ring, two hundred yards, three hundred yards, off the pier-head. Unless the night before has been a busy one, and then the boats will be alongside the pier, and instead of row-boats you shall see, towards four or five in the afternoon, lugger after lugger slowly hoist its brown heavy sail and make down the narrow tideway, dropping easily with the ebb, or towed against the tide by a heavy rope from the pier in the same leisurely way.

But in the night it is a very different story. However sound the sleep that sleepy Cornish air brings you, it is odds but one night you shall be wakened in the small hours by cries and bustling noises. Then if you go sleepily to your window, you see in the bright moonlight the whole quay on both sides lined with the luggers, and men in each of them busily stripping the shining pilchards out of the dark nets. They have “shot” a second time, and sooner than lose the tide, have hauled nets, fish and all, straight aboard, and run for home.

Only one set of creatures at Looe are busy forever—the gulls. Morning and evening they are circling, soaring, plunging, or swimming over the narrow channel that divides East and West Looe; and whenever either Looe looks across from its windows at its rival over the water, there is always a white breast, grey wings, or a dove-coloured back seen in the foreground of the picture. For the fishermen, as they strip the nets, toss overboard the broken fish, and the bed of the river, as you see it in clear water, is dotted white with these leavings. Down there the dead fish wait till the crabs or eels have their will of them, but whatever drifts is the prey of the gulls; and there is always something adrift to keep the white and grey pack wheeling, screaming, chasing, and calling, and adding the last touch of

the picturesque to the huddle of grey houses.

To the fisherman's instinct nothing fishy is alien, and I was naturally curious about pilchard. In Looe, as I have hinted, pilchard is in evidence: you see him everywhere, and you smell him—a strong oily smell—before you see him. Beyond these facts, I had ascertained that practically the whole take goes away to the Mediterranean—the bulk of it shipped to Genoa—and I had learnt from one of the greatest fish buyers on the coast that the pilchard is nothing more than a big sardine, and a sardine only a small pilchard. It was a proposition, however, that the Cornish fishermen could not bring themselves to accept: they were confident that in any possible mixture of pilchards and sardines they could pick out the pilchards. I had pushed my investigations as far as the curing-shed, where there is a big structure of concreted tanks—ten in all,—each tank able to hold many thousands of pilchards. The process is simplicity itself. When a new tank is started the fish are pitched into the bottom, without any formality of cleaning, and a certain proportion of salt is thrown on them; next day more pilchards and more salt; and so on, the liquid exuding from the fish making their own pickle, till at last the tank is brimming. There the fish are left until sufficient time has elapsed to pickle the latest lot; as for the under layers they are, *a fortiori*, sufficiently pickled. And the beauty of

the process is that with it fish cannot spoil. You may leave them a year or even two years and they will not be overcured; and therefore you need only barrel them as the demand comes in. Then you pack them in circular rows till the barrel is full, and put it under a screw-press, which brings the fish down perhaps a third of the way; then fill up again and press again, and so on till your barrel is packed tight and contains the regulation weight. And in the meanwhile the oil exuding the staves is running into a tank and will fetch £3 a barrel in Bristol, where the finest of it makes castor-oil, and the dregs go into soap.

The shed in question was owned by an Italian firm, who have another establishment at Polperro, and the process represents an improvement on the old method of curing the fish on boards. The difference simply lies in this, that the fish in the vats can wait on the market; the fish cured in "baulks" must be sold or lost by a given time. Why did not the fishermen build vats of their own? I asked. None had the capital. Why did they not combine? There had been talk of that, but nothing came of it. As it stands, therefore, the great bulk of the fish that comes in is sold to a single firm, who have a practical monopoly and can make the price; for those who still cure their own fish are few, and even they, as has been shown, work at a heavy disadvantage. Here in Looe, as everywhere, the English are paying dear for their unwilling-

ness to accept the principle of industrial co-operation.

Curing-sheds, however interesting to the amateur, are smelly places, and decidedly the real thing to see was the fishing itself. So I applied to the old boatman with whom I went "whiffing" for pollock and mackerel, and he presented me to the skipper of the boat in which he had worked for a matter of twenty years after his time in the navy. Your sergeant when he retires from the army does not find any great stock of active occupations; but your petty officer, with his pension of from sixteen shillings to a pound a-week, can make a very pretty living when he settles down in a fishing port and draws another pay direct from the blue water.

Tide was dead low that day a little after noon, and the Matilda had—in the autumn of last year—been got down in the morning and was moored outside. The skipper arranged to pick me up at the ferry at four, and I retired to make provision. My landlady—a sailor's wife herself—said that Cornish pasties were the only fare for sea-going, and I (in my ignorance) laid in a flaskful of whisky.

At four accordingly the crew of three crossed over for me—the skipper, a man well up in years, who had followed his trade from boyhood; a pensioner of the naval reserve; and a good-looking young chap of seven-and-twenty, fair-haired and bearded, but showing that Jewish or Oriental type which is so common in

Cornwall that one is reminded of the Phœnician strain, as of the Spanish on the coast of Connemara.

By five the jib and mizzen were set, the big lug hauled a-peak, and we were standing under a light northerly air eastward past Dundererry towards Ram Head; and thirty or forty other brown-sailed boats were heading the same way.

It was a Monday, and Cornwall is a devout county; so neither Saturday nor Sunday night had the fleet been out, and they had therefore, more or less, lost touch of the pilchards. When we had run five or six miles down into the bay the leading boats were to be seen heading round, and our crew, who had all the time been debating chances together, now joined in a discussion, shouted from boat to boat, "Seen any sign?" One boat, it seemed, had seen a pilchard jump away in-shore to the west of us; but that was rather shoal water for a ten-ton lugger like ours. And so we cruised round and round, watching the other boats, watching the water for any sign, watching for the plunge of a gannet or even a gathering of the gulls, and watching the sun also for the time of shooting.

The theory of the thing is, that fish are most likely to go into a net just at the change of light; and accordingly you shoot just before sundown and haul with the first of the dark. If the moon is up, as she had been the week past, before sun-

set, that is bad; and as it was, her rising before the daylight was fully out of the sky did us no good.

Still, even under poorer conditions, the same boat had taken seventeen thousand fish the week before, and thirty thousand the week before that; and in the meantime, good or bad for fishing, it was about as lovely an evening as ever came out of the sky.

Grey and a little misty when we came out, it cleared overhead and on the horizon, as the breeze freshened. At first only the long slope of the cliffy hills towards Polperro could be seen. Polperro itself, in the haze of veiled sunlight, looked far distant. But half an hour before setting the sun blazed out in a wind-swept sky, and the long low line of the land running out past Mevagissey and Gorran Haven to the Deadman Point—behind which lies Falmouth—was plain to see. It was just then we “shot,” about a mile from the Dowerry cliff, heading due south. The nets are stowed amidships in the space filled by the cabin in a small yacht; a cover of boarding lies over them. The first buoy was flung overboard, and there was a little discussion: should the net ride at the full depth—sixteen feet below the buoy? It was decided to shorten, as the water was shallowish, and as each buoy was tossed out a loop was tied on the connecting line. Each net is 120 yards long, and it rides from a line of buoys, sinking by its own weight. The buoys are fast to the head-rope, on which are

set small corks, not large enough to float it, yet enough to make it lighter than the net itself, which hangs free below it. Before you shoot, every stitch of sail is taken off the boat—and in heavy weather the masts too are lowered, and baskets towed over the side to check the way—and then, over goes the first buoy out to starboard on the windward side, and float by float the long string, over half a mile of it, is slowly paid out.

All about us were boats dropping their peaks and starting for the slow drift; and behind them the sun was just going down into a bank of cloud, while the low line of green hills under him seemed one translucent mass of glorious golden olive, beyond the dazzle of the water. Then he plunged into the cloud bank, and the barred heap of vapour glowed as if molten; and over in the east beyond Ram Head the grey clouds caught a rosy flush. But the golden bank of hill grew solid and dark again, and more and more dark and solid, as the last of the sun’s disc, clear for a moment above the hill-crest, sank out of sight. And the net was still paying out slowly, slowly, till it came to the last knot, and the young sailor spat on it—“There! good luck go with you,” he said, as the drift-rope went overboard after it, giving it a clear thirty yards that the net might fish out to the last corner.

There was nothing to do now but drift wherever the tide and breeze might choose to take us—nothing but to

put a lamp amidships for a signal that we were a fishing-boat and unmanageable. A trawler out of Plymouth came up through the fleet, and excited the indignation of our crew, for instead of a side-light she carried one at the masthead, which should signify that she also had her net shot and was out of control. She was going to shoot in-shore of us, along the sand, and the sight of her started one of those disquisitions on the whole race of trawlers that begin whenever fishermen are together. Here, as everywhere else, anathemas are heaped on the steam-trawler; hake and gurnet, fish that used to be had in thousands on this coast, are now hardly fished for, and all because the whole ground has been scratched and torn up and the spawn destroyed. So at least the naval reserve man stated it while we were rigging a couple of lines to fish for pollock. It was a discouraging business at the outset, for the little chad (as they call the small sea bream here) nibbled off bait after bait, and with impunity, until one, larger or rasher than the rest, took the hook in his mouth, and his tougher flesh made a more useful bait than the half pickled pilchard. Presently a pollock came, but a small one, not two pounds weight; and then the skipper took one line and I the other. One would say the hand-line fishing should put every one on a level, but the fact is that he hauled in nine or ten of the beautiful olive-brown fish, running about three pounds weight, while I got barely one.

If pollock were only as good as they looked,—or if they were cooked as an Italian of the Riviera would cook them,—what an excellent thing a pollock would be!

The moon was well up by now, making a silver shine over the sea and all about as the lights were bobbing and twinkling on the grey water; and the skipper, even while he hauled in the pollock, had his mind on pilchard. We were hardly shot before there was sign and no mistaking it. Suddenly from astern of us—but away on our lee, alas!—there arose a screaming of gulls. There they were, thick as bees, rising and settling, screaming and fighting, while at the noise grey wings came silently and swiftly flitting low over the water to join in the bickering and the spoil. The next net east of ours had struck a school; if the fish had been in number sufficient to carry the net down they would have headed for the bottom; but when the net is too strong for them to move it, they put their noses up, and the whole thing comes to the surface, while the greedy gulls peck and tear among the strugglers. As we watched the water took a different colour, whitened and smoothed round the mass. That was the oil coming out of the pilchards, they told me. The cry subsided a little, then broke out in a new place farther east again—some one else had “knocked up.” But about our net it was quiet enough. Still the fish were in the bay; that was proved, and by more senses than one. “I hear pilchard,”

said the skipper, as he swung his bait overboard. At first I could distinguish nothing, but gradually one's ear detected now and then, first on this side then on the other, the dabbling noise as a shoal rushed through the water on the top. But it would need a trained ear to swear to it, even on a night when the breeze was so light.

We left the lines to fish by themselves for a while and stepped forward into the cuddy for a cup of tea. The skipper praised my landlady's pasties, not without reason; they were something in the nature of beef-steak pie done up like a jam tart. About the whisky I said nothing, for I remembered that my boatman had looked a little hurt when I suggested beer to him, and had explained that he was a "staunch Rechabite." He did not smoke either, so he told me quite simply, "since he had found the Lord"; but he was quite prepared to admit that there were "good people that smoked," though in his own case he felt that it "made for condemnation." So I ventured to ask the skipper if he smoked. He had never touched tobacco nor any kind of spirits in his life. And the young man was the same. Very pleasant they were about it, too, quite free from any touch of bigotry; and certainly they might be taken round the country as patterns of what total abstinence may produce. The navy reserve man smoked, and I hinted to the skipper that perhaps he would not be averse to a glass of whisky. But the

skipper said no—without consulting the pensioner, however—and I felt that my experience of boatmen was being entirely revolutionised.

Indeed, if it be not an impertinence to say so, these Cornish sea-going folk fill one with respect. Pleasant company as possible these three were to me,—except, indeed, that they were inclined to treat a landsman as if he were a baby in long clothes who could scarcely be trusted to get into or out of a boat on his own feet; and, rough-looking people as they were, living the roughest of lives, there was not a rough word on their tongues. The navy reserve man made one little slip in speech—I regret to say that it was provoked by a mention of Mr Courtney, who sits for this Division—and he was promptly called to order, and reduced to the nicest amenities of political discussion.

The nets would have been shot for an hour and a half when we began hauling. In this light weather three men manage the job readily enough, but in the fall of the year they carry a fourth hand, and they must want him. And, even of a fine night, put an average strong man—say a 'Varsity oar—to take his share of the hauling, and I think he would have enough of the unfamiliar strain. Once the drift-rope is in, one man stands by the tiller and hauls on the float-rope—this is the heavy work; the others fetch the net in over the side, shake out the fish, and get the floats and the folds of

net into their place, so that the whole may run out again like line off a reel.

As bad luck would have it, the net was only too light in fetching in. Plenty of it came aboard before we met a pilchard, and then it was only a stray fish; after that they dribbled in, single fish sticking in the bottom of the net. Only just here and there did I see a panel of the net which gave me an idea of what a big catch might be; for here the fish were stuck all over it in white bunches, and as the net lifted this white gleam showed through the silvery bubbles, whiter than they. But what astounded me was the length of the business. I took a spell at hauling when, as I supposed, we were about half-way through, and hauled single-handed for perhaps ten minutes, expecting every minute to find myself at the end—at any rate resolute to go on till I got there. But it was not till long after that that I heard we were through four of the eight nets, and even after a second spell of hauling along with the reserve man—it is light work for two—I doubt if I brought in more than two nets all told. It is a very different job from the short heavy lift on a trawl, ending with a desperate heave at the end when you land the bag of the net aboard and see all your take in a lump, tangled up with a mass of stone and seaweed. With the drift nets it is a slow, steady labour, hauling, hauling, for an hour at the least, and probably when the nets are full, two hours

or even more. For no matter how quickly you handle them, it takes a second or so to wrench out the pilchard that is hanging by his gills without tearing him and to chuck him into the big basket or maund of plaited cane that stands beside you and fills slowly or rapidly as the case may be. There are stoppages, too, when the net has “rolled”—but a net well shot, as ours was, scarcely has a twist in it—and sometimes from other causes. “’Vast hauling, conger drill,” I heard; and they explained to me how the extraordinary circular twist in the body of the net was made by a small conger that had attacked the caught pilchard and “drilled” up and up, trying to get it away, winding the meshes into what to you or me would have been a hopeless tangle, but, in their skilled hands, unravelled out in a moment.

If it was poor fishing, the consolation was that others were no better off. Light after light went out as the boats got under way—sure sign that there was little in their nets—and when the last cork came in there were few vessels left on the ground. Only the couple of boats that had “knocked up” were still busy away to the east of us, and as we hoisted the lug and ran home we crossed a trail of floats that showed another net not half in yet, and therefore presumably full.

Two maunds—a miserable five hundred and a quarter—was all the shot brought us, and with the high bright moon there was no use to try another.

In the dark, however, this is done by "bryming." All lights aboard are put out, and a man stands on the bows and stamps heavily every moment or two. The shock on the water scares the pilchards, if they are there; and even through the night the flash of their silver bellies shows as they turn and scud.

It was pleasant on the water, but pleasant also to be getting in. The breeze that had held steady all evening died, after the manner of breezes, and left us half a mile out, with a strong ebb running down the river. All the boats were brought up in a huddle together, exchanging chaff and questions, and putting out sweeps to get to their moorings. It was close on midnight—and the skipper told me the time within a quarter of an hour by the position of the pointers and the pole-star—before we got in. I was landed on the west of the water on some rocks, but at the full ebb of spring-tides the boat could not reach the pier steps in East Looe, and the youngest of the crew had put his high boots on to give a back to the other two through twenty yards of water. I stayed to watch the result, for the skipper was a solid lift, but when I got to my coign of vantage above the

river-mouth, persons could not be distinguished. All I saw was a pack of boats and dark figures moving in the pale moonlight, and all I heard was a babel of cheerful voices. It is an easy trade under those conditions of weather, but a chancy one. Our night's take was not worth 5s. But with luck it might easily have been ten thousand—which really means more than twelve; for you count by the "long hundred" of six score, and give a "lass" in on the lot of ten thousand. And pilchards are worth at present 8s. a thousand on the quay. Divide that into six shares, set three to the share of the boat, and give each man one-sixth for himself. It came in good weeks to £2, in fair ones to 25s.; but a man working at it week in and week out does not average £1 a-week, they say—the wage of a farm labourer or little better, and earned at a far more dangerous trade. But a trade of infinite variety and excitement, one would think, with the touch of gambling always present, beyond the death hazard; and I would sooner earn £1 a-week as a fisherman than three times that money groping and sweating in a mine.

STEPHEN GWYNN.

CRICKET RECORDS.

DURING the long period between the dawn of first-class cricket in the eighteenth century and the rise of cricket-reporting in the nineteenth century the records are so incomplete and the details so meagre that the story of cricket is little more than a series of bare results and of names from "Long Robin" to "Little Bennet." So far as batting records are concerned, the lost details need not cost the cricket statistician a single sigh. Scoring was invariably low. Bowling feats, on the other hand, are in a different position. There must have been some phenomenal performances. As, however, the excellence of cricket feats has always to be judged by a relative standard, it is perhaps immaterial that great bowling performances are not on the books. Until the conditions under which cricket was played were everywhere assimilated, it is clear that any comparison, even if it could be made, would be unfair and misleading. Apart, therefore, from the absence of all reliable data, cricket records should be confined to modern cricket. Even when so confined they are an interesting study; for cricket probability, if the most inexact of sciences, is by reason of its

speculative character one of the most absorbing. It is a science which boasts only one axiom, expressed in five words: "The possible is the probable." The truth of this generalisation can be proved in two ways. Either you can demonstrate its accuracy by analysing the nature of the game, or you can prove it to be true by the facts of figures. As to the first, no phrase is so trite as "the glorious uncertainty of cricket"; none is more often used without its significance being understood. From the point of view of the batsman, consider what a record or even a great performance means. The former is only possible under certain conditions. The first obviously is a perfect wicket, natural or prepared, as smooth as a billiard-table, and almost as durable. The second is, that he must find two or more—in most cases more—of his side in such form that "somebody will stay with him" while he makes runs. Such conditions as fine weather and "time" are understood, but as a rule an essential condition is that his side must bat first, and he must go in early,¹ if the record is to be an individual record and not one shared with a partner. Any modern batsman likely to break record

¹ A. C. MacLaren, 424, and R. Abel, 357 not out, both went in first when they made these scores, the largest and second largest on record in first-class cricket. J. S. Carrick, in making his 419 not out in second-class cricket, carried his bat through the innings. MacLaren batted for 7 hours 50 minutes.

who remained in for two whole days would easily accomplish the desired end. On the opening day of a first-class match the time devoted to actual play is usually $5\frac{1}{2}$ hours; on the second day play should extend over at least 6 hours. This would give him $11\frac{1}{2}$ hours at the wicket, and if he scored at the slow rate of 38 runs an hour, he would break the existing record. If he scored at the Jessopian rate of 100 an hour, he would become immortal. In all probability, however, a record innings would not be a fast innings all through its course. Many of our most reliable batsmen rarely exceed 20 to 25 runs for the first hour of a big innings, but treble that rate of scoring when they have worn down the bowling and the ball comes along looking as large and conspicuous as if its diameter had been increased six-fold.

A record score, given the necessary conditions, is thus always possible; it is therefore, also, theoretically probable. The degree of its probability is, however, a delicate and difficult practical problem. If we take the five most successful modern batsmen, Abel, W. G. Grace, Gunn, W. W. Read, and Shrewsbury, players whose active participation in the game has extended over a period sufficiently long to have afforded them several of those opportunities fulfilling all the conditions necessary to the making of a record, what do we find?

Simply that the facts are all against a record score being made, even under conditions most favourable to its making. These great batsmen have played between them no fewer than 4280 innings.¹ Deducting one-fourth for innings played on "bowlers' wickets and one-fourth for innings played under other circumstances rendering a big score unnecessary or impossible, we have 2140 innings played under conditions favourable to exceptional performances. What are the facts? Between them these five great batsmen have scored 275 centuries, and only forty scores of over 200 and four above 300. It is at this point that you enter the fascinating region of cricket probability. How simple the whole matter would become if you could apply the ordinary rules of arithmetic. A batsman plays 50 innings and scores 10 centuries; therefore in every 100 innings he will score 20 centuries. Hence a hundred from his bat when he goes to the wicket is what is called "a five-to-one" chance. By similar reasoning you reach the arithmetical probability of a score of 200 or 300 or more. Let us take the figures of one of the five as typical. Up to 3rd August Abel's figures were:—

Innings.	Over 100.	Over 200.	Over 300.
838	55	7	1

Here, then, you have in all the rigidity of cold figures the probabilities of the situation so

¹ These figures, it should be explained, are only up to date in the case of Abel; the 273 of Gunn against Derbyshire this season is, however, included.

far as Abel¹ is concerned — number of innings for the deducting one-half from the reason already stated.

Against 100.
Nearly 8 to 1

Against 200.
Nearly 60 to 1

Against 300.
Nearly 419 to 1

If we subject to a similar analysis the innings played by the five most brilliant batsmen of the younger school, men who have only played on the "plumb" prepared wickets of to-day, we will find the veterans have no cause to feel ashamed.

The five batsmen selected are A. C. MacLaren, K. S. Ranjitsinhji, C. B. Fry, Hayward, and Tyldesley, and the following table enables a comparison between the performances of the old and the young brigade to be made:—

	Innings.	No. Centuries.	200 or over.	300 or over.
Veterans . . .	4380	275	40	4
Juniors (to 10th August)	1648	138	21	2

It will therefore be seen from the above that the "odds against" the various scores from 100 or over to 300 and over on all sorts of wickets are as follows:—

	Against 100.	Against 200.	Against 300.
Veterans . . .	Nearly 16 to 1	109 to 1	1095 to 1
Juniors . . .	" 12 to 1	78 to 1	824 to 1

It would be possible to draw some interesting conclusions from these figures. Relatively to the wickets of their earlier days, the veterans are shown to be better. When further allowance is made for the fact that the veterans are slower between the wickets, the superiority of the old brigade is clear. W. G. Grace, it may be noted, loses 33 per cent of the run value of his hits for this reason. So the writer calculates, after assigning the hits of several innings their proper value and

making some deduction for the lethargy of the field when W. G. is batting—a lethargy due to the fact that the fielders know he will not attempt a second or third run in cases in which a younger and more active batsman would do so.

This aspect of the figures is not, however, the most important. By themselves they may seem to solve the problem in probability by a very simple application of arithmetic. Yet a very little consideration will at once show that your reason-

¹ There is little doubt that the two best batsmen of the season, C. B. Fry and Abel, owe their success to the fact that they have struck the golden mean between the two extremes. The former will no doubt equal Abel's record in course of time. At present Abel is incomparably the most consistent scorer the world has ever seen. For seven successive seasons, the present included, he has scored over 2000 runs, yet he was a veteran when he first performed the feat. Grace has scored 2000 runs only six times in his long career, but the seasons have not been successive. Abel owes his present position to sheer study of the game, and is far more of a made than a born cricketer. He has still to devote his powers to the study of how to overcome the physical disadvantages under which he labours. He takes the profession of a cricketer seriously.

ing begs the whole question. Cricket is a game of constant antagonism, in which the skill of eleven is set against the skill of one, in which the unexpected is always happening, in which the batsman can never afford to relax his vigilance, in which a momentary loss of self-restraint on his part may lead to his downfall, in which one such error is fatal, and in which opportunism is a quality essential to success. A good modern wicket, it must be remembered, is literally as true as a billiard-table, though of course its durability is not such a permanent possession. It is a "made" wicket, prepared in such a way that the layer of ingredients on the real ground corresponds to the slate of the billiard-table. Here and there it may be chipped or worn, and "spots" may be created, but, as a rule,¹ it remains from the first ball to the last a wicket on which the pace and flight of the ball, once mastered, may be subsequently calculated and anticipated with such precision that batting becomes mechanical, and run-getting is not so much a matter of "timing" as of "placing." How, then, do modern batsmen of the best class lose their wickets on such pitches? "I felt as if I could stay in for ever, and as if only carelessness on my part would get me out." These are the very words used

by one of the five veterans to the writer. The batsman had just been stumped after making over 200 and being at the wickets for five hours without giving a chance. Then a good-length ball very wide to the off came along. He should have left it alone; but with a momentary recklessness he indulged in a little fancy forward play, lost his balance, and was stumped. In the language of the cricket-field, he "got himself out."

And here you have the key to the truth. Human nature in flannels is just the same as human nature in ordinary clothes. Sooner or later it errs and "gets itself out."² The writer is one of those who chronicle the game and have to spend thirty-six hours a-week watching closely, either with field-glass or naked eye, every ball bowled in two first-class matches: he has, therefore, enjoyed exceptional opportunities of noting and estimating the character of those fatal errors, without which, in dry weather and on true wickets, finished matches would be impossible, and cricket would cease to be really interesting. Every "situation" would depend on the weather for its development, and such of its dramatic character as can now be traced to the fallibility of human nature would have to be attributed to a prosaic shower and a hot sun.

¹ A cold late spring is detrimental to wickets. It does not affect their initial excellence, but is fatal to their durability. The Brighton wicket, the most "natural" of all the pitches of to-day, was apt to "break" after 400 had been scored on it during the driest period of the present season.

² The best modern batsmen know how every ball should be played—especially the ball which has just dismissed them.

The psychological aspect of the problem, it is true, does not give the average professional or even amateur batsman much concern. As a rule he is a precisian, and knows very well when he "takes liberties with the bowling" or "runs risks."¹ The greatest masters of defence are not those who know that they should avoid the "off" ball. They are essentially those who avoid it the longest and whom nothing can tempt out of that watchful self-restraint which is the very genius of correct and consistently successful batting. Each and all of them know that if they go "nibbling" at the monotonous succession of "off" balls, which the more mechanical of the bowlers of to-day send down, they must sooner or later be taken in the slips or at the wickets. This season they have also had to avoid the temptation of the simple leg-ball, whose seductiveness, however, is not quite so difficult to resist. If they avoid such balls, they are very unlikely to get out save from a mis-hit in driving. These mis-hits are, however, of fairly frequent occurrence, and ac-

count for the number of catches made at third man, mid-off, cover-point, and extra mid-off. When they happen they are undoubtedly due to the fallibility already referred to. In cricket language the batsman is said not "to get properly hold of the ball." This implies that it was a ball which he could and should have hit in a certain way. If you could eliminate the factor of fallibility, if you could make the batsman really the mechanical cricketer he appears to be when well set and playing certain balls and hitting others, then on a good wicket you would never get the best batsmen out at all, unless early in their innings the bowler happened to send down a ball belonging to what is called the "unplayable" order.² No ball, of course, is really unplayable: balls which are so designated are simply deliveries of a wholly unexpected nature. They may be sent down by chance or by design; but in all cases their deadliness is due to their differing from all previous balls and to the unexpected happening. During the present season, for example, the writer was watching closely

¹ Mr C. B. Fry, in a recent post-prandial chat with the writer, put the matter this way: "I have not been out for some seasons to a ball that I did not know how to play. I am always out to balls which I play wrongly, and instantly know that I have played wrongly, through a momentary carelessness, due, as often as not, to over-confidence." In other words, Mr Fry loses his wicket partly because he is human and not a machine, partly because neither he nor any other batsman can anticipate the "unexpected" ball.

² This does not imply that batting is a simple art or run-getting an easy matter. The point urged is that our greatest batsmen at their best on perfect wickets have the bowlers at their mercy. The nature of the "unplayable" ball varies with the batsman and his personal and peculiar weakness. Australian bowlers turn these personal peculiarities to far more account than most English bowlers. An Australian bowler would always try to "get" Ranjitsinhji and Abel at short leg.

through a field-glass every ball sent down to one of our leading batsmen when in the "nineties." The wicket was a "plumb" pitch, but its durability was doubtful. Up to this point, however, the bat had beaten the ball, and the batsman, who was nearing his century, had experienced no difficulty with the bowling. Then came a ball that "turned inches," and completely beat the bat. It was a clear case of the unexpected triumphing over the mechanical method into which the batsman had naturally fallen after playing over after over of balls that all came off the pitch at the same pace, at nearly the same height, and in the same direction. The erratic break or rise of such balls may be due to very trifling causes, one, at least, of which no batsman can anticipate. A worm may work its way up, and the little mound of earth which it raises may be so elevated during an over. When the ball pitches on this small excrescence it may turn or shoot in quite unexpected fashion. In a recent match only two balls out of 1584 were noticed to turn at all! No wonder 1229 runs were scored for 23 wickets. The two balls in question were probably turned by such worm-mounds. In another recent match at Lord's a great batsman was nearly bowled before scoring by

a ball which "shot." He afterwards made over 100. Probably the ball that nearly bowled him kept low and came on unexpectedly fast for a similar reason. One result of these perfect pitches is that the natural law of cricket, which they violate, is proving self-avenging. They are gradually producing a race of brilliant rather than sound cricketers, between whom and such steady players as P. F. Warner, Hayward, and W. G. Quaife there is almost as much difference as between the old first-class batsman and the mere club cricketer.¹ Most of our batting is at present brilliant, but it is so unreliable that it is very doubtful if we would have won a single "Test" match if any had been played this season. The public have made a hero of the hitter, and the Press as usual has followed the lead of the public, so that the evil grows by what it feeds upon. It seems unnecessary, however, to labour the point further. Sufficient has been said to make it clear that the breaking of a batting record is never probable even under conditions most favourable to its accomplishment.

There are, of course, other and rather less technical reasons why a record, even when possible, should not be set up. This is an age of fierce competition between the counties. This fact

¹ The critics have been very severe on Hayward for his "slow" play this season, but he has so often had to play the rôle of the saviour of Surrey by sheer steadiness that the failing is a virtue. Hayward's experience in facing crises would probably make him this season, as in 1899, our most reliable and successful batsman in test matches.

makes the winning of games the great end which all captains have in view, save in those very exceptional cases in which a side can afford to dispense with a victory for the sake of the record. But these reasons for records remaining long on "the books" are of comparatively recent origin. They scarcely existed before the County Championship became a definite competition and before the power to "declare" became part of the written law of the game. This might account for the long period for which some early records stood, were it not for the fact that records have been less permanent and more often "broken" under the new than under the old order. Some of the old records, it is true, still stand; but these, for the most part, are records for particular grounds, on which the wickets, though often good, are never so durable or so consistently reliable as the pitches of such famous run-getting grounds as Brighton. Some are "records" for particular games in which, owing to the quality of the attack and the greatness of the occasion, a phenomenally large individual score, gauged by the absolute standard, cannot reasonably be expected.

Turning to the bowlers, you find yourself in a region of great deeds and few records—at least in the strict sense of the term. The reason is not far to seek. If the merit of a batting performance is a question of circumstances, it is still more certain that the greatness of a bowling feat must be judged by the relative standard. It

must obviously depend upon the nature of the wicket, whether favourable to bowlers generally or to the successful bowler in particular, the calibre of the opposition, the period of the innings, the state of the game, the greatness of the occasion, and other circumstances.

It is obvious, for example, that to take for few or no runs the last five wickets of an eleven with a notoriously weak "tail" is a much less meritorious performance than to take the first five wickets of the same side. It is also clear that the taking of many wickets on a bowler's pitch is not a performance calling for the same praise as the dismissal of a side cheaply on a "plumb" wicket, especially in matches in which the issue is not calculated to upset the nerves of the men dismissed. This is an important point. In estimating the merit of a bowling performance the greatness of the occasion, as affecting the nerves and hence the batting power of a side, must necessarily be taken into consideration. The history of the game is full of examples of sides who have been dismissed cheaply, not so much by reason of the deadliness of the attack as by their own inability to screw their courage up to the sticking-point. Let one instance suffice. In 1896 Lohmann and Richardson dismissed the Australians on a perfect pitch at Lord's for 53. Absolutely considered, this is perhaps the greatest bowling feat on record in a match of this class; yet those who know the true story of that memorable collapse are

only too well aware that it was not the ball but *the occasion* which beat the bat.

There are, however, several other aspects of the same question. The moment the necessities of a situation compel a side to adopt methods of meeting a strong attack other than those natural to its powers, the side is handicapped. If it possesses the quality of opportunism, and the strain upon its ability merely reveals latent talent of a kind different from that which it usually displays, then the bowler meeting with unusual success against it under such conditions may be awarded the pride of place due to a great performance. If, however, it lacks adaptability, then his success is largely discounted.

The truth of this generalisation may be made clear by a particular instance. Teams like Surrey, who play all their home matches on the same ground, and, as it happens, on one of the easiest pitches in dry weather, are apt to become very mechanical in their timing and style generally. This tendency towards mechanical methods is due to the ball always or nearly always coming off the pitch at the same pace, rising to the same height, and turning, if it turns at all, to the same degree. When such a team find themselves in a "tight place" on a wicket favourable to the bowler, when the pitch is sticky and the ball comes in all sorts of unexpected ways, the very mechanical accuracy which makes them masters of the situation on their "plumb" pitches at home is so stout an ally of their enemy

the bowler that his performance loses half its merit, and cannot be compared with a similar performance against a team like Yorkshire, who have unconsciously acquired and cultivated adaptability to conditions, by being forced to play their home games on many grounds, all differing in pace and so forth, and all possessing certain peculiarities which must be mastered.

How much of their success Yorkshire owe to the fact that they play on more grounds than any other team, Kent, perhaps, excepted, it is impossible to state; but it is at least certain that Surrey would be a far more dependable side if all their home games were not played at the Oval, while Yorkshire would not be the most consistent of the counties if they changed cards for a season with the Oval team and played one-half of their games on the ground of their old rivals at Kennington.

One must also regard the value of a great bowling feat from the individual standpoint. There are some names at which the batting world grows pale. Certain bowlers get many of their wickets by reason of the fear which their reputation inspires. Richardson, in his great years, must have secured many victims who were beaten by his reputation, not the ball that bowled them; and this apart from the well-known fact that certain batsmen never overcome their inability to play certain bowlers. This inability may be a personal idiosyncrasy, or it may be due to

diffidence.¹ The Rhodes-Jessop duel of the past three seasons is scarcely an instance in point, for the Yorkshire bowler, even if he does invariably secure the wicket of the fastest scorer of the day, only does so at the expense of a sadly damaged average.

This mention of Jessop's triumphs over Rhodes leads naturally back to the moral effect of a bowler's name in securing victims. That Rhodes can be hit,² in fact unmercifully punished, is made clear by the performances of the Gloucester captain during the past three years, and by the dashing innings played by young Frank Crawford of Surrey against Yorkshire at Bradford in June of the present season. The name of Rhodes has no terrors for either of these fearless hitters, and the punishment to which they subjected him by adopting the very methods most likely to render him innocuous is only a further proof that most great bowlers—and Rhodes is amongst the really great—owe as much to the terror which their success has inspired as to the skill which secured success when they had no name to conjure with.

It is obvious, therefore, that regard must be had to all the circumstances when an endeavor

is being made to rank in order the best performances on record. These great performances either may be sustained throughout a match or an innings, or may be periodic; though it must be noted that the final test of bowling ability, as distinct from the skill shown on isolated occasions, even if the bowler sets up a record or records, is necessarily the sustained character of the success achieved, not merely in a season but in several successive seasons. Allowance must, of course, be made for certain facts: a very fast bowler cannot last so long as a slow bowler, while a bowler who is overworked, and on whom his side almost wholly depends, cannot be expected to bowl so consistently well or to endure so long as a bowler on a side rich in this particular kind of talent. The very fast bowler has rarely a long career of success, while the overworked bowler is apt to become mechanical, and so to lose his sting. It would be invidious to prove this assertion by instances, but many examples will at once occur to all familiar with first-class cricket.

What, then, all the circumstances being considered, is the greatest bowling performance on record? One need not look

¹ Abel's alleged inability to play certain fast bowlers is merely an example of the argument from exceptions. A few "cheap dismissals" on fiery wickets furnished the sole foundation for the original statement, which soon became axiomatic by repetition. As a matter of fact, in 93 innings (thrice not out) against Mold, Kortright, Jones (Australia), and Bradley, Abel scored 3816 runs and averaged over 42. He was dismissed only 36 times by the fast bowlers, as against 54 times by the other bowlers. These facts speak for themselves, and it is unnecessary to add that he has scored a century against every county.

² K. S. Ranjitsinhji said to the writer the other day that the proper way to treat Rhodes on a sticky wicket was to go in to him and hit him—most men try to play him and fail. Such is the influence of a "name."

for it amongst the many fine bowling feats performed on bowlers' wickets in low scoring games. As the final test of bowling ability is sustained excellence against odds, of success achieved under conditions favouring the bat, and necessitating not merely the display of skill but of courage and endurance, the greatest performance must necessarily be some feat performed under the conditions outlined. It is for this that we need have no hesitation in assigning pride of place to Richardson in the "Test" match at Manchester on July 16th, 17th, and 18th, 1896. In the first innings Richardson sent down 68 overs, and bowled practically the whole day on a perfect pitch, yet he never tired, and did not send down a really bad ball, and eventually took 7 wickets at a cost of 168 runs. In the second innings, when Australia went in to get 125, he bowled as no man has ever

bowled under similar conditions. Amidst intense excitement, he made the Australians play for every run, and eventually, with three wickets to fall, they still required 25 to win. A chance at the wicket off his bowling was missed, the superhuman effort was checked, the runs were hit off, and the greatest bowling feat on record just failed in securing its "crowning mercy"—the victory which the bowler had deserved, but could not quite command.

In that feat all the qualities of greatness were shown,—endurance, skill, courage, the fight against odds.¹ Into one match was compressed one-tenth, or one-eighth, of the work done by bowlers of repute over a whole season of first-class cricket in the early "nineties." If you doubt this, compare the full figures for a season of great bowlers with those of Richardson in the match:—

		O.	M.	R.	W.	Average.
Season 1892,	Lockwood . . .	881.1	273	2054	151	13.60
" "	Briggs . . .	1045	438	1705	124	13.74
Test Match, 1896,	Richardson . .	110.3	39	244	13	18.53

On the same principle, we are forced to prefer all great performances under similar conditions to the very best of those done on bowlers' wickets, however superior by the absolute standard the latter may seem.

In discussing the relative merits of bowling feats, one is happily saved the necessity of even considering the question of prepared wickets. To take

wickets on pitches which "might have been made" for the bowler is a precisely similar feat to the making of runs on a perfect pitch prepared for the batsman's special delectation. Wickets are bound to fall in the one case; runs are certain to come in the other, even when allowance is made for the human element as a factor predisposing the batsman to error.

¹ Richardson recently told the writer that he has often felt more tired after bowling than he did at the conclusion of this great effort. "I am getting more worn out every day," he added with his cheery smile. He had just taken 7 Notts wickets, by a superb bit of bowling, for 89 runs in a total of 347!

The ideal bowling record, the "highest possible," would be the taking of 20 wickets for 0 runs on a perfect pitch! Such a feat, if unknown, is possible. All our great bowlers, but two in particular, Richardson and Emmett, sent down occasional balls that were practically unplayable. If, for example, Emmett, in a brief period of inspiration begot of success, had been able to send down, or had ever sent down, ten successive balls in two innings, each a perfect sample of his unplayable ball—a delivery which pitched between the legs and the wicket, broke away and removed the off bail, and thus combined all the constituents of a difficult ball, length, awkward pitching-place, break, and rapid rise—the "best possible" would even now be on the books.

But, happily for our batsmen, no bowler who bowls these unplayable balls has ever been able to arrive at any degree of certainty in the matter of their delivery. Sometimes a bowler succeeds in delivering several such balls in a few overs. When this happens we have what is called "sensational cricket."

Judged absolutely, the record, as distinct from the best, bowling performance is, of course, A. D. Pougher's 5 wickets for 0 runs against the Australians at Lord's in 1896. But this is merely the record because no other bowler has by chance ever succeeded in taking the same number of wickets without a single run being hit off him. No matter how well a bowler may bowl, or how cleverly he may avail himself

of his opportunities on a wicket that might have been artificially prepared to suit his bowling, the chances are that some lucky snick will go to the boundary, some catch be missed that will yield a single, some mis-hit fall safely out of reach. The taking of 6 wickets for 4 runs (Rhodes, Yorkshire *v.* Notts this season) is just as great a performance as the 5 for 0 of Pougher and the 8 for 5 of the late Edmund Peate against Surrey.

Given the pitch, anything may happen, and the degree of the success, so long as full advantage is taken of the state of the wicket, is very much a matter of chance. Notts were dismissed for 13 this season. If they had been dismissed for 0 or for 26, the credit due to the bowlers would have been just the same: the failure to make the 13 runs actually made would have been due to chance or to still greater demoralisation of the Notts batsmen; the making of 13 more to fortuitous circumstances or to some stout heart unshaken by the fate of his fellows. Let some cases be cited in support. In 1899, against Middlesex, Somerset lost 8 wickets for 8 runs in 4 overs. Then Woods by lion-hearted hitting made 20, and the total was eventually 32. And the same thing happened when Surrey were dismissed for 16 by Notts. Maurice Read made 9, but was badly missed before he scored—a fine example both of the one-man effort and of the fortuitous circumstance.

Like cricket averages, the records are only a convenient

arithmetical method of comparing at a glance the merits of different performances made under conditions which figures cannot show. In so far as a record may be merely meteoric and the result of a fortuitous combination of circumstances, it is clear that it is of more interest to the student of cricket probability than are the averages.

It was the intention of the writer to ignore all events in the cricket world after 3rd August, but the extraordinary scoring of the week following that date has so emphasised certain of the points urged as to compel attention. The sixteen first-class matches played during the week produced close upon 13,000 runs for under 400 wickets. This triumph of the bat over the ball is extremely instructive. On certain natural wickets, and on pitches affected by rain, the scoring did not exceed 22 runs per wicket. On other pitches—those which escaped the showers, and are of the artificial order—the rate rose as high as 62 per wicket. The disadvantage under which the bowlers laboured on the perfect pitches is emphasised by the number of centuries—33 being scored in six days against the 158 made during the previous three months. It has been urged that this triumph of the bat over the ball was mainly due to “dropped catches.” This is a mere journalistic *tour de force*. Relatively to the longer duration of innings, no more catches are now missed

than in the past; they are merely more carefully chronicled. Nor can one admit as logical the conclusion that because so many runs were afterwards scored by the men thus let off, the runs would not have been scored had the catches been accepted. Such reasoning is based on an interruption of the sequence of events, and there is, therefore, no guarantee that the course of the innings subsequent to the dismissal of the batsman missed would have been what it was. Moreover, “dropped catches” are due to the human element which, even if it were desirable, cannot be eliminated from the game. The perfection of pitches is alone responsible for the heavy scoring, and the great problem which our cricket legislators have to solve is how to frame laws which will restore the balance between bat and ball. Prepared wickets are the most difficult of all wickets under certain circumstances—the easiest of all wickets under other conditions. The real difficulty is how to restore to bowlers on plumb pitches their lost advantage without unduly increasing the great disadvantage under which batsmen labour on bowlers’ wickets. To finish matches in a day would be the ruin of that flourishing industry—county cricket; yet the “prepared” wicket is the head and front of the offending: constant playing on such wickets makes batsmen quite incapable of overcoming the difficulties of a bad wicket.

HAMISH STUART.

THE CONQUEST OF CHARLOTTE.¹

PART I.—MY LEGACY OF FAMILY HISTORY.

CHAPTER VI.—THE MACKEREL ELECTION.

THE eight or ten years that follow until I reach my own assured recollections of Rab and his household are the twilight of memory. Some of my knowledge of them came in my legacy of family history, some of it was of my own imperfect gleaning. Which is which I cannot clearly distinguish, nor shall I vouch for the true order of the incidents now to be set forth. But they are true. They are running in the blood of my Charlotte still, to speak for their truth.

In these ten years fifty came to a fruition. The generation to which belonged the old people of my acquaintance in the Bowes ripened to the harvest, and Death putting in his sickle reaped them one by one. Absolutely forgotten, they are, now—or recalled, if ever, because of their association with a living rascal! My grandfather, Provost Trail, also was of that generation, and went to his place with a great flourish of trumpets; and even I, who inherit from him, remember him only because of Rab, whose day of dying, like our own, is still to come. This great Conspiracy of the Living, in which the very mourners are joined to depose dead men from their thrones in living hearts!

Early in these years Rab and his wife Charlotte had started life together in a house at the east end of St Brise, towards the harbour. Rab ostensibly was a tailor, and he took as well to doing something with a pack—to keep his legs out of that humiliating crook, he said. “Even a tailor is the waur for getting into a sameness of seam”—that was one of his flying jokes. Clearly he was thriving, ’spite of my father’s eye upon him.

That earlier affair of the smuggling had given a wider notoriety to his talent, which had spread its wings now and engrossed the bigger affairs of the county. These were the days when the Panacea was proclaimed, and the fate of the country was thought to be whirling on ten shillings upon the quarter of wheat. Rab was a citizen of fortune, ready to crack a jest on any principle. Stories filter down to us still of sayings and doings of his at men’s parties of both colours of politics. He was introduced with the port at Trail and Clephane boards, and mellowed the bitterness of the agriculturists against Sir Robert Peel by gibes upon Lord Kinnaird up in the Carse, and the guano notions of Dr Buckland. A

¹ Copyright, 1901, by Dodd, Mead, & Co., in the United States of America.

little later his foot was frequent on the shore-road leading to the house of the Whig member, Sir Ralph Inch, and Sir Ralph himself, when he was at home after Parliament rose, on many a morning took his horse exercise along the sands as far as the brae in front of Rab's door—as far as Rab's door, even, some said: which is quite likely, seeing the handsome woman who opened it when one knocked.

Between his old patron, the Provost, and his new, Sir Ralph,—implacable enemies,—Rab played his cards with entertainment to himself and to the town. His introduction to the esteem of Sir Ralph appears to have been a jest, delicately flattering to both. My grandfather Trail was Conservative even to his dress: he was the last gentleman in the county, I have heard, to wear his hair in queue. Sir Ralph, a handsome bachelor, who left behind him handsome sons and daughters by various mothers, doing his duty thus by his good looks, affected the newer fashions. He appeared one autumn in St Brise with a shapely white hat, a new thing in London, under the sweep of which his curly brindled hair looked boyishly rakish—the note of his gallantries. Adelaide Lord met him on the steps of her father's bank, and had to be packed off to her grandmother in Stonehaven to be cured of her languishings. From the following winter dated the great Muskatt scandal, which flamed through the Westminster Courts a year or two later.

Some have derived both from the white hat, which played its part also in the humbler fortunes I am narrating.

When Sir Ralph had returned to London, one or two young bucks in St Brise swaggered it in a headgear of the same colour and mould, to the indignation of the Provost, whose modish antiquity, in truth, they rather threw into the shade. But one market-day they were joined by still another white hat, upon the head of a dirty, dishevelled character, one "Schlatcher-foot" by by-name. There was a deal of laughter and trotting through the market with the story, while the dandies bolted to their houses, with a flash of white like rabbits to their holes, as Blelach described it not too delicately in his newspaper,—and that was the end of white hats for a generation in St Brise. It was known that Rab had commissioned and launched the wastrel upon the High Street, which won him fresh favour with the Provost, and Sir Ralph was reported to have roared at the jest when he read of it in the 'St Brise Journal.'

It may be, I say, that this gave Sir Ralph his first hint of Rab's quality, and was the beginning of dealings between them. I am misty about the order of events. But it was the Mackerel Election (as it came to be called) that brought to an end Rab's running with the hare and hunting with the hounds. He had to make a choice, and he chose Sir Ralph. Why, I cannot say. If a for-

tune out of contraband was still his bull's-eye, he would get no help from Sir Ralph in hitting it, come of the election what might; whereas, of course, the Provost—you have seen what my grandfather was! Undoubtedly, in his own interest, it was Provost Trail whom Rab ought to have stood by. Maybe he could not resist the flattery of joining the company at Sir Ralph's; maybe he enjoyed the company too much to forego it: there is no denying that he had a big mind for the world. Or, perhaps, it was mischief only. Sometimes I have thought that the man was at the mercy of every imp of fancy; at others, that he ordered himself like a machine, inscrutable to people like myself only because we are not so devilishly clever as he. It is possible, then, that he made the opportunity of slipping his partner, the Provost, from a traffic the profits of which could bear division no longer. It is possible even—Huts! if you knew the man you would scarce doubt it—the opportunity was made by him for that discovery of which the clue was first given him in stray words of the man Tullis long ago in the Bowes woods.

With his cognisance of my grandfather's smuggling transactions, of course, Rab could snap his fingers at my grandfather's wrath. The Provost never did admit that the involuntary voyage across the North Sea which he made in Rab's company was other than accidental. Of that you shall judge. But after that event

he had no more dealings with Rab in any business, and none in smuggling with anybody, so far as I have heard. And my father was allowed to carry off his daughter Grace by the front door instead of by the back as (so 'tis said) had already been planned.

That hot election, when Mr Clephane of Clephane attacked Sir Ralph's seat in the Tory interest, came off in the early autumn, and on an afternoon shortly before it Rab and the Provost went out for the first mackerel. There was nothing in that to cause folks to wonder, save that it was near the poll for so keen a politician as Mr Trail to spare an hour or two for sport.

"Ho! ho! mackerel!" Rab cried, when he told me the story years after, saying, as plain as if he had spoken it, "It was brandy and Geneva he was after."

"Your grandfather, Dauvid"—the Rascal was always familiar—"your grandfather never forgave me that unskilful bit of navigation,—and, to be sure, it had an awkward consequence. He took me with him to his grave, Dauvid, and, mark me! that's a queer thing to think of. There were reasons—not to mention them—why he should not publicly blame me for it, and all the more on that account, the thing, and me, stupid man, that did it, were propagating maggots in his brain. If you had opened him up—though 'twould have been a pity to spoil so dainty an atomy—I believe you would have found Rab Cuick in his

very tissues. You're a scholar, and'll ken all about it to name the philosophy which says we have no existence save in other folks' minds. . . . Gad! there's truth in that! And here's a bit of me lying up in the kirkyard wi' Provost Trail, and no end o' bits o' our neighbours lying somewhere in other folks' graves, more or less decomposed. And when I'm—so to say—gathered to my fathers, I'll maybe take wi' me a portion o' you, Dauvid—a leavening portion, to be sure. You never thought of that, laird! Yet it's worth pondering. . . . Just in connection wi' this Provost Trail bit of me, I put the problem to the Back Bowes minister. 'What's your opinion, Mr Borrowman,' says I, 'when it comes to the last trump and the Resurrection Morn, and by a wondrous alchemy, as Shakespeare would say, dust will fly to its dust, to which body will those stray bits belong, think you?' 'Robin Cook,' says he—I could see he didn't comprehend the question—'you'll best mind the bit o' yoursel' that your Maker's intrusted to your own keeping, for assuredly, Robin Cook, you'll burn in hell if you don't mend your ways. Take my words to heart,' says he; and says I, 'I wull: and then, if that's true that you say, Mr Borrowman, there'll be a bit o' yourself that'll frizzle.' . . .

"So you see, laird, you may be laying up an uncomfortable time of it for yourself if you harbour a poor opinion o' my future estate." . . .

An ill-conditioned, irreverent rascal!

They ran down by Torrie Town under half-sail, dibbing as they went with a bit of white rag; and by-and-by, lifting their lines, stood the cutter out for the Firth mouth. They ran down the coast—"just for the sail, it was sic a lown and bonny night," said the Provost, whose likely tale it is that I am telling: and at this point in it his listeners would change their legs uneasily, or steal a wink at one another, according as they were sensitive to a plain lie. The gloaming fell about the time the May was reached, and when they were tacking to return something happened—the Provost never was certain what it was, but if it hadn't been that that Dutchman was lying handy (the Provost spoke like a landsman, though by title "Admiral of the Firth") God kens what would have become of them.

Though the Provost told the story otherwise, their errand was to bespeak the Dutch herring *jager* which they had trysted for the gloaming at the back of the May. She was the 'Mijntje' of Maassluis, 150 tons, owned by a man called Dunlop, which, it appears, is a Dutch name, and this voyage Dunlop was on board her. I forget, now, the adventure he marked by his visit to the herring-fleet, which in this late season still lay off the Doggers' Bank; but, slipping through them in the

morning, he cruised in the offing awaiting the Provost's tryst. He was hanging over the side when the cutter brought up alongside the 'Mijntje,' and flung out a rope which Rab caught cleverly. His skipper, Tromp, was beside him to give a hand in getting the Provost over the bulwark, and the four, exchanging the greetings of old friends, moved at once to the little cabin.

The Provost and Rab knew no Dutch, and Tromp denied any but the slightest English; so the talk passed by way of Dunlop, who could converse in half-a-dozen European tongues. Tromp and the Provost went down first, speaking simplifications; Rab following, with a foot on the hatch, turned to raise a finger and eye to Dunlop, and pressed an urgent story into his ear. When they came below the Provost was already set down to brandy. The spirit was in a bottle of heavy French glass, with a case of silver curiously chased, and the Provost had it up in his hands inspecting and fingering it in the dim light of the lamp.

"A fine case," said he, tapping it.

"And a soul to match the body," answered Dunlop. "Pour."

"I have, and pree'd," the Provost said. "A bonny bottle, all ways."

"One of a pair my father brought out of Rostock. The neighbour, finer still, is at the English widow's."

"The——?" said Rab.

"My brother's widow — Dirck's."

"I maun have a glass out o' *that* bottle," said Rab with a chirrup under his breath. At the same time he poured a bumper and drank. The Provost looked at him curiously, for he was always a sparing drinker.

"You're in great spirits," he said.

"There's great spirits in me," answers Rab with a smack and a laugh.

On the table were Leiden cheese and white bread, and Tromp had ladled himself a bowl from the coffee-pot. He scraped the cheese on slices of bread and handed them round. The sea-air had sharpened the Provost's appetite, and he ate with a relish, on which he remarked.

"Replenish, replenish," cried Rab. "We have a gey journey in front of us," and winked to Dunlop.

"So we have, so we have. We had best get on," says the Provost innocently.

The Dutchmen lit their pipes. Rab and the Provost sipped their brandy, and the Provost more of it. Then it was to business: a matter of accout and reckoning on some past traffic, over which the Provost and Dunlop haggled, and the question of an autumn run. The Provost counted out the guineas, and replaced the bag in his pocket.

"Now we maun be off," he said, rising and leading the way above.

His tongue was loosened with the spirit, and he kept them clustered on the steps to tell a story of the election. Tromp,

understanding nothing of the Provost's humour, pushed forward, and presently was back bawling for Dunlop.

The Provost was left with Rab looking for the wind.

"How long will it tak' to make St Brise, Rab?"

"We'll be back before the folks are done remarking on your absence."

The Provost looked round sharply, and Dunlop was at his elbow to answer his inquiry.

"Here is misfortune for you," he said. "The cutter's broken away, for certain."

"The cutter!" cried Rab, and ran forward.

The Provost spoke jocularly to Dunlop.

"Never mind, Dunlop," said he; "you maun just carry me back to St Brise. Any story will do of how you picked us up. . . . Huts! man, we'll concoct a likely one by my fire over a bottle o' the best that ever came out o' Willem Dunlop's cellars at Verre."

"A big word. And the air of St Brise doesn't suit me."

"Ho! My ain town," says Mr Trail, cocking his head.

"I carry a cargo I doubt you couldn't *visé*, Provost—even in your ain town."

"A cargo that has got to be run quick, moreover, if it's run at all," continued Mr Dunlop. "I like not the look of it," jerking a thumb in the West.

"Dunlop, this is fair ridiculous."

"Persuade Tromp o' that if you can. He's the skipper here. And there comes a gentleman may have a say in

the matter. Discuss it wi' him."

He went forward as Rab joined Mr Trail.

"We're in a hole, Provost, a hole; the cutter's gone, beyond recall, and here Tromp swears if we're to win home it maun be round by Vlaardingen."

"Pooh! They look for dirty weather from the sou'-west. . . . Tell the man, Rab," says the Provost eagerly, "there's just a ripple o' wind."

"But it'll whistle through the night before long. I heard the swell as we passed the Longshots—a certain sign. Moist and warm upon a falling glass, too. . . . Hark ye! that's the anchor!"

"This is by-ord'nar conduct!"

"You're powerful against Routine yourself, Mister Trail," says Rab with a grin.

"It's a job," groaned the Provost, lurching forward as the *jager* dipped under the great black sail flung up upon the main-mast.

"Holland awa'!" cries Rab. "It's a place I've aye had a fancy to see, and the folk in it—some folk. . . . 'Faith, I might promise a queer outcome o' this adventure, Mister Trail."

"You're in the pay o' the Whigs!" cries the Provost, dancing.

"Gently, if you please, Provost, gently. Whigs and Tories are all one to a tailyer with a wife and a rising family—the last no' christened. . . . I'm sorry for the Misses, your dochters: they'll be anxious. Steady. . . . And the election, as you would remind me—un-

fortunate; tho', for me, I've little gust for politics. Other folks' illicit traffic is a big enough load o' outside interest for me to carry."

"At any rate you'll be free of that burden, henceforth."

"That's all very well," says Rab; "but see whaur it has landed me—here, not to speak o' henceforth, on a rascally Dutch smuggler, and a storm brewing, with a cargo to run on a coast as shiftty as a lawyer's plea (begging your pardon)—even if we make land in safety six days to a moral before I'm restored to a sorrowing family. And the election six days from now! . . . By, she's racing! That Tromp's a devil. . . . 'Twouldn't surprise me," says Rab, "were he to hoist a besom mast-high."

"A what!"

"It's not every day they run awa' wi' an Audmiral," Rab grinned again.

The Provost turned away in despair.

The sun had set behind copper bars, a vaporous veil fell round them, and an eager wind ran through the night.

"*Allemachtig*, as the Dutch-

man says," said Rab, putting a hand on Mr Trail's shoulder and pointing to where they left St Brise behind them. "What a town that'll be the morn when the news o' this spreads."

"You're a damned rogue, Rab Cuick, a clever, damned clever rascal," cries the Provost, throwing him off, and goes below without another word.

I have observed already that my grandfather Trail was in his own way a very siccar man, and now he forbore to display further his anger and chagrin. Doubtless he played the best card that was left to him. For the remainder of the voyage he was to appearance gay and unruffled. Indeed, ere it ended, he and Dunlop had sailed into a very serene friendliness, so that when they landed at Vlaardingen the Dutchman helped him to a vessel sailing for Leith within the hour, whence after all he might arrive home in time for the poll. To that Rab made no objection. It may be the compact ended on Dutch ground. In any case Rab was the last man to spoil a good finish.

CHAPTER VII.—THE MACKEREL ELECTION (*continued*).

Life for the Rascal was like a rubber of whist: with each fresh deal came a fresh combine, with nothing carried forward from the last save the score and the ambition to better it. He spoke of it so: "I'm sat down to an interesting hand," he would say of his adventures. By the kidnapping

of the Provost he was sat down to a master hand, and from the other side of the North Sea could read the cards the others held and gloat over their playing of them.

When my grandfather disappeared, the Conservative cause in the burgh ran down like a clock that has its mainspring

broken. The two parties were left equal or as nearly so as man could tell, and the situation was the better spiced because neither knew how to take it. Everything lay in the fate of the Provost, and whether he was drowned, departed for ever from his native pavement, or whether he might reappear before the poll to rout Sir Ralph and carry Mr Richard Clephane to the Commons, none could tell. It is true that the Provost's cutter was found keel uppermost on the rocks west of Crail the next day after it had set sail for mackerel; but even that news—such was the Rascal's repute in the town—was able to persuade few that Rab and the Provost were at the bottom of the Firth. It is not to be supposed that Rab went unrewarded for the kidnapping (though I never heard the figure he was paid, or out of whose pocket it came); but it would seem that concerning the manner of the exploit he had not taken counsel with a being in St Brise. He was a man who derived all his pleasure in life from his own contemplation of it. There had grown up about him, thus, an air of expectancy, which gradually became, after a manner, authority: the tailor, with a disreputable standing in the town, could still challenge its reason, and make it doubt the conclusions to be drawn from the upturned boat and all common-sense.

The comedy of the Mackerel Election is enshrined in the file of the 'St Brise Journal' of that day. It was at this time that its proprietor, Blelach,

unmasked the full armoury of his impudence with which he scourged the town for half a century. The 'Journal' was Sir Ralph's organ, but still more, in Blelach's ambition, a burgh institution; and to make it that, the lash had to be applied (discriminately, of course) all round. The picture in the file, therefore, is marvellously complete. The Clephane men professed a hope that the Provost might return, for on his return depended their success; yet, lest laughter and ridicule at the idea of their being tricked should overwhelm them, they were constrained to play condolence with the Provost's family and with Charlotte. Sir Ralph's party, on the other hand, dared not countenance the story of a trick for fear that they should be credited with inspiring it, and gave out their belief that the Provost was irrevocably drowned; but even as they said it their tongue was in their cheek in a chuckle at the bare thought of their opponents being dished by Rab. Blelach brought out his paper without a mourning border, and gravely announced within that he did so in deference to what seemed to be the feelings of both parties, but that such as wished it with the black band could have it so by calling at the office. He offered his condolence to the leddies, the Provost's daughters, wrapping it up in a figure in which the Clephane hope for their father's reappearance was a silver lining to their black

cloud. In a gibe, for such as could read it, he alluded to the woman, who might, or might not, be widowed, as Rab's derelict. On the day the cutter was found, Mr Clephane and Sir Ralph met, for the first time in the contest, on Charlotte's doorstep, where she held them very haughtily while Mr Clephane stammered over his sympathetic inquiry. Sir Ralph, slipping from the boy's health to her own, expressed concern that she should stand on her feet so long. She answered with her thanks, and would they excuse her?—and there was nothing for them to do but to clap on their hats and come down the stairs and into the street together. Sir Ralph looked into the other's eye in parting, and laughed; finding Mr Clephane shy at this confidence, "deucedly handsome woman," he rapped out, and rode off with his hat ajee on the brindled curls. When he called at Rab's again, two days later, the door was opened by old Robin Cook, whom Charlotte had summoned from the Bowes to bear her company.

The situation, so sappy for discussion over a bottle in after-years, was one a man might well laugh at who forgot, or had never known, Charlotte's share in it. If it set out St Brise like a problem, what did it do for her! How much better than her neighbours had she learned to expect Rab's tricky hand behind every adventure that befell him! "I have a husband," she might have echoed Row-

land, the lawyer, "who never gets into a hole that he does not know a way out of." The thought of a husband playing this trick upon the world and upon her—and she suckling a child not five weeks old—was not less bitter than to mourn a husband at the bottom of the sea.

Of the battle of pride and love fought within her heart at this time, the legacy holds proof. Old Robin, established in the house, was a sounding-board for all the gossip of St Brise. He was out and about in the fermented town, everywhere, at all times of the day, not so supple on his legs as once, but still keeping time with his oaken staff to the rise and fall of his spirits. In this manner all the shameful play with Rab's name and repute came to Charlotte's ears, till she could have cried out at the sound of it. Now it was certain that he and the Provost were drowned irrevocably; again, there was a hope that they had been picked up, else had the bodies come ashore with the boat. When Robin stumped up the stairs with confirmation of the find west of Crail, he marvelled that her tears did not seem all of grief but were mingled with self-reproaches. Within an hour he was back again with a story that the town did not believe in the upturned boat—it was part of Rab's devilment: then he had to wonder that the news did not console her. Some one who knew more than his fellows, or saw farther, set afloat an explanation about Rab and

the Provost running cargoes together.

"Might it not be true?" demanded Robin of Charlotte. "Think. There was that old story—of the cast shoe. Was there truth, think you, in that story? Was there? Was there? Was Rab a rascal?"

Charlotte bent her head lower upon her babe.

"If I but had him here," cried Robin, brandishing his staff.

"If," she answered.

"To be sure," cried Robin. "Poor Rab, gone, drowned—and the lad so fond of the sea, too."

Then pride revolted against the dominance of love.

The Provost's daughter, Grace, my mother, was one of the few who from the first gave up the mackerel-fishers for lost. She must have been a sweet and tender heart; for me, alas! only a memory, but fragrant like that of the roses and sweet flowers in the Back Bowes garden. She was along at Charlotte's the next morning after the mishap, and all unsubtle and guileless found the tears that had run for her father come afresh at thought of losing a husband, as had Charlotte. She was thinking of my father, Mr Shirra, between whom and her filial affection her heart had been wavering for years. What Charlotte said to her I do not know, but she returned in a manner comforted by the sight, as she thought, of a greater sorrow. Her sister Sarah was a woman of a different temper, sour and suspicious, and deep in her father's mind, though he

believed that for his daughters at least he had drawn curtains over all its windows. She had never despaired of her father; but at the report of the finding of the boat an uneasiness crept over her, and she came along in the dark to feel Charlotte's mind on the news. She was full of a Christian resignation, if the worst really had come, and she fished for any secret hope that Charlotte might derive from her own knowledge of her husband's rascality. Her talk ran on many texts that proved the Provost, her father, to have died, if drowned he was, the death of a just man, and that the Lord's hand was in all events, howsoever strange to the eyes of poor mortals it might seem that the good and the evil should suffer together. For if Rab had gone down, it was indeed a dispensation, and the lesson for us all, Mrs Cook, was to walk uprightly and ready for the day and the hour we wot not the exact coming of. I know Aunt Sarah's way. At the same time God gives the evil man a long rope, and was it not possible that even now Rab was hanging on by it. "I know, I say, Aunt Sarah's way. And when that drew nothing from Charlotte there was an exhortation to confess and repent.

"Woman! woman!" cried Charlotte in sudden desperate anger, "bide at home and leave me to mysel'."

At home, Aunt Sarah found her minister in the house comforting her sister, and sent him straightway to the unregenerate woman in the east end, whom

she had found so hard of heart. The minister came to Charlotte, and, surely enough, his words seemed to beat upon a rock. A priest must be a by-ordinarily wise man. This one prayed next that the heavenly Father would be a Protector to the widow and the fatherless. And in the midst of it Charlotte stopped him vehemently, in a storm of tears. . . .

"Pray for his return—for his safety," she cried. That was the only prayer she would hear in that house.

The Thursday of the election (as Blalach records) was the first day of frost that autumn, with a sharp keen edge on the air, though a golden mist of exceeding fineness lay in the wynds, at the sea ends of them, and the fresh sky was flaked with light and tawny clouds. It was weather to bring the whole town early into the High Street, converging upon the Tolbooth, where the hustings were and the poll; and Mr Clephane, riding in from the eastwards, had to dismount thirty yards short of the National, and shoulder the distance to his rooms there through a crowd still good-humoured. Sir Ralph watched his arrival from his quarters at the Bell, which was westwards from the town-house, and had windows commanding it. The National looked to the sea through the narrow vista of the town-house wynd, to the eastwards of the Bell by a dozen shuttered shop-fronts.

In an article exuberant with the potations of victory, Blalach describes the intervening market-place as a battlefield where

all forenoon Mr Clephane rallied the Tories with the courage of despair in the absence of his gallant ally the Admiral. If that party had a hope that the Provost held some winning card up his sleeve and would appear on this day to play it, they were disillusioned now. Provost there was none. Further to embitter their temper came the news that some votes pledged under private pressure of the Provost were likely to fail them now that it was removed. Nicky Frew, the dog, put up his shutters and bolted his door, and gave no sign of life when Tory emissaries demanded him forth. Captain John Barker, late of the whaling ship *Unity*, parleyed with them from an upper-storey window. In language that smelled of the sea he called down a murrain upon their Whigs and Tories, Free-traders and Protectionists, lubberly scoundrels all. "Hadn't he promised his vote?" "Hadn't the Provost promised?—Well, he would say no more about that, save only this: 'Grippy-for-grippy' was his adage," said he. "Produce your Provost;" and clapped to the window.

All the forenoon the battle went on, the Tories growing sullen and desperate, Sir Ralph's men crowing. By three o'clock in the afternoon every man who could be persuaded to walk or to be carried had voted, and Sir Ralph stood one ahead. He had polled the last man on his list: the issue depended on the ability of the enemy to wile forth their re-

calitrant pledges. The Whigs threw a strong posse into the street eastwards to block the town-house steps. Against this the Tories held a reserve in the National yard ready to rush them, if need be. The windows of the Bell and the National glared at one another, and underneath their partisans stood ready to fly at each other's throats at the first word of temper flung across their heads. The market hummed in suspense.

On the Torrie-Town road dwelled a bedridden and comatose ten-pounder, notable Provost's man in his day, but now wisely giving his sensible moments to reflections on salvation in the next world instead of the chances of Protection in this. Rumour had it that this morning he was showing unusual signs of liveliness, particularly in apostrophising the broth served for his dinner. News reached the National breathless that Captain Barker seemed wavering under offer of a salve to be substituted for the Provost's against the Captain's vote. A desperate hope turned towards the Torrie-Town invalid, and a gig, slipped from the National, raced by a back way on this forlorn rally. It must have been about the same moment that a smack drew through the fine mist in the Firth, and, sailing up the trinket, landed Provost Trail on the east pier-head.

So far as I have heard, none save the smack's crew saw him step ashore. The first to whom

he appeared were two or three decrepit bodies in shawls and overcoats still venturing the air forenent the sun at the house-doors of the Fish Wynd. They touched their hats by instinct; and he returned the salute so gravely, with so much of dignity, that it scarce seemed he was in a hurry, though in reality he was trotting hard as Fanny Jenks. Before they could utter "Michty me! There's the Provost!" he was out of sight.

Farther along the shore he picked up the town's officer, Trickie Morton, airing his cocked hat in a sequestered spot at the salt-pans, wisely retired from the rabble whom it was his nominal duty to keep in order. Trickie shook in his knee-breeches at the sight of the Provost's ghost advancing at a run, but the Provost's word of authority stiffened his backbone, and he trotted by the Provost's side, discovering the situation as they went.

Near the foot of Rab Cuick's Wynd a cadger's cart was standing, the horse yoked and tied to the stable-door. "Up!" says the Provost, and in a trice they were on board, and skelping along the shore-road. Above the seaweed at one of the garden-ends a little cloud of tobacco-smoke floated.

"That's Nicky!" says the Provost, laying his hand on the rope-reins and bringing the galloping horse up splarging, rump in air. My grandfather was a particularly acute man. Nicky's red, ferrety face ap-

pears over the wall, and remains transfixed in a wondering stare.

"I'll give you a lift," says Mr Trail quietly.

"Is that you back, Provost!" gasps Nicky.

"Did you think I would forget!"

"I'm coming!" cries Nicky; and next minute he was out of the garden-door and up beside them.

"I was enjoying a quiet smoke, preparatory to recording my vote," he said, as casually as he could, as they went bumping among the ruts.

"Cutting it rather fine!" snapped the Provost, anxiously watching Trickie manœuvre the corner of the town-house wynd.

Up in the market-place is Babel. The town-bell is churning for the stroke of four. Sir Ralph has had a brass band in hiding in the stables of the Bell, regaling the inner man on pies and porter, victorious fare! and now they are slipped into the street, with conquering strains bursting from their pursed lips. A groan goes up from the Tories at the National. They, too, have their musicians, already under orders to get home as best they may, for that their tooters are not needed. A base thing, a mercenary—most of all when found useless after his hire is paid! The day is lost, and they know it. Captain Barker still holds back, and even he cannot save them now. Let Mr Clephane mount his nag, and ride away into private life before rotten eggs pursue him. Plague on the

Provost who has dashed this golden opportunity. Dead! Drowned! Little fear! Yet if not, then where the devil is he? Rab Cuick! Ha! a job! This is beyond the bearing strain of temper. A fist leaps out of the National window, shaken towards the Bell. The Bell jeers back at the National, and you could swear that the lips are forming "dished." An egg flies from inn to inn; a meteoric flash of yellow-green, signalling chaos. Blue and yellow fly at one another. A roar goes up between the houses. "Sir Ralph! Sir Ralph! Reform for ever!"

In the uproar it is not observed that the fist at the National, ceasing to menace, has loosened and is pointing a finger down the town-house wynd. The cadger's cart is now in the straight of it, bumping over the cobbles, Trickie aloft, with weather-beaten face and yellow hair like a young Patroclus. Is it the Torrie-Town ten-pounder? An even poll, then! Trickie is drawing nearer, scattering the crowd in the wynd. See! see! It's the—the Provost! the Provost! And Nicky Frew! The Provost and Nicky! A pair, a pair! Race, Trickie, race! Dismount, Mr Clephane, M.P. for St Brise. Rally the band now. A cornet, a drum, and a bomberdon,—all that fall in. . . . Marshal the three, then; and out into the street with them. Beat and blow; swell lungs, stretch muscles, and proclaim Tory victory. Clephane! Clephane!

It is only those at the National who can see the situation. Before they at the Bell can grasp it, Trickie has drawn up at the corner, and the Provost and Nicky, flanked by the Tory reserves, are battling for the town-house steps. "Over your heads, men!" The Provost is lifted above the crowd, but will not release hold of Nicky's coat-collar. "Both, then." Up goes Nicky, also, and the two are bundled to the town-house door. "Down with you, now, and run!" The Provost and Nicky fly upstairs, but the clock strikes as they reach the landing, and the door is clapped to in their faces ere they can record their votes.

Before it is well understood what has happened, and with all the town still yelling for him, the Provost has slipped out of the town-house by a back doorway, and has reached the arms of his daughters. Their anxiety exempts him from a public appearance, it is explained; and doubtless the story he has to tell sticks in his throat. That land-lubber story—of the bonny evening and the Dutchman lying handy—was told many times that night, nevertheless, as one after another of the Clephane party found his way into Mr Trail's dining-room; and in the excitement of the day's work and the miraculous reappearance of the lost magistrate, it passed as a likely narrative. It was only in the light of the morning's reason that the North Sea Bubble (as Blelach

called it) caused winks and sly kicks under the table. Tonight the whereabouts of Rab are forgotten. It is known that he has not returned to St Brise, but whether he is in Holland or in Leith these chagrined politicians do not stop to inquire.

Well on in the evening, however, towards nine o'clock, the party was broken in upon by the announcement of Mr Robin Cook, and on the back of it walked in the mercurial tailor.

The Provost advanced and shook him by the hand.

"My son is Rab Cook," says the tailor.

"The companion of my surprising adventure," answers the Provost. "I owe you an apology—'tis to you I should have first brought the news of his safety."

The complacent greeting shook the little tailor's mixed feelings.

"Me, sir! Not I! It's him that owes the apology for going. Rab was aye a—ahem! But his wife and bairns—they are anxious, Provost. Is't true the lad is safe?"

The Provost coughed. Heroic measures were necessary.

"Safe; I am glad to say, sir, and thank you: for in a measure I owe my own escape from drowning to him, although, to be sure, in a measure I have to thank him for my ill adventure as well. It was he persuaded me, 'gainst my better judgment, to sail so far that night. Sirs," he continued, "you must excuse me a while; I have a duty

with this gentleman. There are glasses and the bottle. Ring for what you want. . . . A word with you, Mr Cook," and he and the tailor went out together.

The news that the Provost paid a visit to Charlotte that night with Robin Cook, by a circuitous way, was over the town next morning, and it was counted to him for a feeling heart as well as for corroboration of his story, which, doubtless, was as he wished. What passed between Charlotte and him was far above Robin's intelligence, though the echo of it, poor man, had a meaning in it, or so it seemed, that consoled him with a better opinion of Rab. Charlotte knew the Provost now; but he braced her, as he had done that far-off day in court.

"I should have been here ere now," he said, "but for these political doings, which are the only serious results of this adventure of your husband and mine, saving a more serious still, that you, mem, and Sarah and Grace, my daughters, have been kept in suspense. But you've heard, I hope, that your husband, though he hasn't hastened back wi' me,—for, unlike me, he has no interest in politics,—is safe and sound, and by this time, doubtless, embarked for home."

"It's kind of you to think of me, Provost, and to come, when your own daughters must be jealous of every minute you're away from them. We have all had a sad time of anxiety."

"But it's over now. You must not take this regrettable accident to heart."

"I am sure, Mr Trail, none took it more to heart than yourself."

"One thing certain: your husband and me will never have another misfortune of the same kind."

"Of my husband I cannot speak," says Charlotte; "Rab is aye in unlucky company."

And with that Robin saw him to the door.

A few mornings later, St Brise, in the words of the 'Journal,' "was thrown into a pleasant commotion of rejoicing by the return of the other shipwrecked mariner. He received a boisterous welcome." I am surprised that Rab forgave Blalach that last word. That he did proves the affinity between these two heartless men.

With the same pride that had given the Provost word for word—with a harder, indeed, because of the truth discovered in that interview, and the surety of Rab's safety and certain return when it suited himself—Charlotte met Sir Ralph when he rode along on the forenoon after the election to present his compliments to her. He called up his servant at her door, and throwing his rein to him, mounted Rab's stairs. It was Robin Cook who opened to him, heard his story, and ushered him into the room on the sea, where Charlotte joined them presently.

She was a handsome woman,

and his eye brightened to meet her. He had a way with him, though it wasn't the Provost's, and he had a repute, and her blood ran with a healthy inspiration at contact with both. Robin could not understand her gay mood, and accompanied Sir Ralph down to his horse in a wonder.

Over the parapet of the sailors' walk an old salt leant with his glass pointed to the east pier. He took his eye from it, and running up to Robin, "My eyes are not what they were," says he, "if that's not Rab Cuick that's stepped off that smack."

He ran back to his glass, now that he remembered whom he was addressing, Robin at his heels.

"It is! it is," cries Robin, and flew to Charlotte.

"It's him,—it's Rab!" said Charlotte, as the two looked from the seaward windows.

"Boy, boy," she cried in ecstasy to the babe in her arms. "Here's your father, boy, your father."

The little tailor was flying out of the door to meet Rab.

Half-way down the stair something made him think better of it, and he returned to the house.

In the front room Charlotte was on her knees, crying over the child.

"Oh, God!" she was saying, "permit him to grow up a good man—no' like his father."

Once more Robin went fly-

ing down the stairs to meet Rab.

He found him at the harbour-head chatting with Sir Ralph and whistling in his cheek. He was specially jaunty and assured, like a man who had won his goal in the world.

"I'm back again, you see, father," he cried, when Robin approached. "My father, Sir Ralph."

"We have met," Sir Ralph answered, "several times. He keeps your house for you in your absence," says he: "when I have called on your wife for news of you I was never allowed a word for her ear alone. He looks well after her."

Something hot burned in Robin's throat.

"Now that you are back again, and high time," he cried, "better you go home and look after her. . . . Man, there's not a soul in the town would care whether you were back or away for ever if it weren't for that woman that you've the privilege of calling a wife."

Rab reddened at the gills, but whistled more cleanly than ever. He had won his present goal in the world.

"We are plain folk," he laughed to Sir Ralph.

"And plain folk keep a plain stick," cried Robin in a sudden heat, and brought his oak staff down on Rab's shoulders.

That was Rab's boisterous welcome; and with it my legacy of family history is ended.

PART II.—THE HAPPY ISLANDS.

CHAPTER VIII.—THE RASCAL CLAIMS ME FOR A BROTHER.

So far I have been writing of Rab as, in a manner, a historical character; now I come to a man of my own day and acquaintance.

It seems to me that since I have known anything, I have known his name and reputation. Getting back to the farthest point to which my memory will take me, Rab's personality impinges upon my consciousness much as a familiar in a fog might upon my vision: from the moment of recognising a figure I knew that it was Rab; but Rab in a mist of scandal and small-talk, and, it may very well be, of prejudice also.

He was clouded, when first I remember him, by the contempt for a tailor which I have never found absent in any one, not even in a tailor himself. Nevertheless, out of this mist of contempt for the tailor race Rab shone by virtue of accomplishments which, as a rule, it does not possess: a skill in bringing music out of cat-gut, and a sharp, biting sense out of as simple words; and a voice of rare quality, never or seldom used in public, but charming all who happened upon it in the woods and lanes.

My first knowledge of these gifts came from the repetition of their praises on the lips of persons of would-be cultivated and catholic taste. Rab's gift of music was surprising—ridiculous even—for a tailor; and they sought by the proclama-

tion of it to discover another of judgment in themselves almost equally surprising. "Rab Cuick, the tailor: yes. And what a gift." "A gift, really?" "A divine gift, I assure you. Of course, I am of your mind about the waste of it. To whom much is given, much shall be required." And so on; until you came to believe that the marvel lay, not in the gift itself, but in their discovery of it.

The tailor-musician was now living with his wife and children, on the north side of St Brise High Street, a little farther west than his old house, in a high tenement, the topmost windows of which—Rab's windows—looked out over a two-storied house on the south side, upon the North Sea.

"If you would cut a gentleman's breeks, you maun have the higher air."

That was one of the sayings with which he sparkled to me in the mist. There was another: I mention it here because, though of a later date, it was with me at that time just a thumb pressure, as it were, modelling the clay-figure in my mind. He was sitting in the shop of a respectable merchant, a grave man with humorous lurkings, listening to a lecture upon his evil ways, and the hope still held out of amending them. . . .

"Aweel, Mister, I'll just away hame—and kill the wife."

"Better than that," says the

other, with a hand on his smile —“kill yourself.”

“Hech! It would just be a deid tailor when dune.” . . .

From stories of that kind, it grew upon me that Rab’s gifts had to cancel more than his trade — a failure and decline, and a wit nourished on want of self-respect, involving wife and children.

By-and-by his wife’s indignities began to be the chief cloud upon him for me, she being a connection of my own, Charlotte Seton. It was never said that he beat her, or even threatened to: had he struck her, he should have suffered in repute just to the point he deserved; for that she was a singularly superior woman would really have made his kick more brutal. But possibly the ne’er-do-weel, arraigned at the bar of his wife’s virtue, suffers undeserved scrimp justice.

Being callow, and a long way off having a passion of my own, I fell into the attitude towards Rab of those whose passion had been harried, and was inclined to revolt from common opinion when, in the absence of direct charges against him, people merely bespattered him in digging for the precious thing, his wife. Once I crowed a little in this strain — not touching the particular case — before my father, a plain man, and surprised him into a tentative like crow. His had a different note; but I imagined that I recognised my sentiment. . . .

“Ay, laddie; you’re liable always to have your wife cuist in your teeth.”

“And why should Rab Cuick——?”

But he cut me short. “That’ll

do, sir,” he said, as hot as a coal. We had been thinking of different cases, he of his own; and to be compared to Rab Cuick was beyond any man’s philosophy. . . .

I think that twice I met Charlotte at this stage. Both times she and I were visiting some far-off cousins from the East Coast, who took up summer quarters in the cottage at the Back Bowes. The second time was crucial, for it gave me my first glimpse in the flesh of Rab, who drove up from St Brise to fetch his wife.

We were set down to tea. With Charlotte were two of her children, a boy and the girl. The girl, another Charlotte, was the younger, fair, and fair-haired, with strands of gold in each wisp, imaging her mother, and tall for her age, for she beat me by a full inch when they set us, back to back, to compare her eleven years with my thirteen. I have mentioned a likeness to her mother; but, of course, the likeness could not extend to the mother’s chief characteristics — chiselling of feature, large roundness of limb and contours. It lay, rather, as I think of it now, and must have observed then without comment, even to myself, in the matching of their eyes, practised in sympathetic language.

The boy, Robin, was older, and black and coarse. You could not have believed the two to be of the same brood. The incongruity must have been very plain, for I noticed it with my thirteen-year-old eye. That was long before Mr Michael Trail, the Provost’s son, strung the bairns on a string

of reason, with his, "It didn't require her children to tell you that Charlotte Cook was a found child. Fine threads and coarse threads, and a mixture. A queer wab."

We had not been sat down long when, looking out of the window upon the sound of wheels on the road, we saw Rab arrive. He was not over middle height, and thin and supple, with an acute and delicately graven face; not so much quick as clean in his actions, so that he was in beside us before we could well get to the door to greet him, and sitting down and cracking as if he had been in the room for hours. This assured and commanding way which was his was the second thing that I observed. The first was Charlotte's welcome of him. She simply surged to the man. It was the first time I ever saw a woman in love, and the thing struck me as unlike anything that had ever come under my notice: my father and mother behaved differently, I remember thinking. I remember thinking also, with a sudden inward fire, that the neighbours were right in anything they said of this man; for he let this woman's love beat on him, and was as indifferent to it as the Voss rocks. And this was my first personal observation, I believe, on the ways of men and women.

Rab had sent Robin to stand at his horse's head. He just said, "Tak' her heid," and Robin went: that was the greeting between the boy and his father. When his wife flew to him to kiss him, he gave her a kind of brush aside, but would have

kissed the daughter, I believe. At any rate he made a motion thereto; and then I saw the girl's fair face go white, and even when he had bent to her, she timidly withdrew behind her mother.

I saw the boy go to a bidding, the wife overflow against that hard man, and the man get soft to the young girl who recoiled from him: four peep-holes into the interior of that family if only I had been old enough to see through them.

After that we fell into the plain roads of conversation for a few minutes, the girl and I keeping glancing out of the window watching Robin at the horse's head from where he made faces back to us. All of a sudden Charlotte says to me—

"Who's that man speaking to Robin? There's two of them!"

"Oh," said I (for I knew them when they came about my father's house), "that's Mr Paton and Mr Dalton in the Excise."

The room was full of our tongues, every tongue in the house wagging at once; but above them all I heard Rab's voice to his wife, and then it was as if he had laid a sudden hand upon my shoulder and on every shoulder in the room—

"Who's this laddie?"

He had got up, and was looking out upon Robin, to whom now the officers were speaking.

"It's David Shirra's son David in the Excise," I heard Charlotte answer him.

"Ay," says Rab, as if he had known it. With that he claps his hat upon his head and my hat upon mine, and not say-

ing a word, or catching my eye even, leads me to the door. And when we were without, "Remember me to your father," he said loud out to me, wondering.

"Oh, you would like a ride," he goes on; and now I had nodded to the officers, and before I could say Yea or Nay he lifted me among the straw in the cart.

"Let go her head, Robin," he calls out. "I'm going to give Dauvid Shirra a turn up the road and back while your mother's getting on her things. Tell her to hasten, for I'll be back i' the now, and we maun start for home."

At this the officers had stood aside, and Rab and I were birling along the road.

Remember I had set out on this drive with an awe for the man in the cart beside me, and at the back of that a very bad prejudice against him because of the way in which he had treated his wife, yet I never enjoyed a quarter of an hour so much in my life. The man simply whirled me up in his gaiety. Between the house and the head of the den he learned that I was fond of music, and fifty things about my father and the officers which he never asked me, but seemed to draw from my lips of their own accord. The mare laid back her ears when he talked to her, and he talked to her as he talked to me, in a clatter of musical sounds; and he whittled and laughed to himself, and I declare it was like a flute played delicately. I have never forgotten the sound of it.

Now at the head of the den, some little distance back from the main road where it debouches upon Clephane, there is a small farm-steading without any name that I know of save "Jock's Toon." Here dwelt one Myles, of whom I had often heard my father speak as a ne'er-do-weel, who gave him and his brother officers great suspicion. At the end of the road to this man's door Rab begins to drive canily, and he says to me—

"Who lives in here, Dauvid, my man?"

"Jock Myles."

"Well," he says, "we'll see if Jock Myles can do me a favour."

"He's a queer one," my tongue ran on, for I was proud of my knowledge. "He poaches, and he smuggles, and I don't know all what. He's a right bad one, my father says."

And then, noticing that the mare had turned into the yard, — and Rab never urged her there that I could see,—"You're not going into Jock Myles's?" I said.

"Out o' the eater cam' forth meat," says Rab. "The worst o' men have their uses," and laughed.

In the middle of the yard, with his arms over the barrier of the reed, was Jock; and he turned at our coming.

"Are you Jock Myles?" cries Rab in a loud voice before the man could fix his eyes on us.

"Awa' wi' ye, Rab Quick!" says Jock.

"Man, Mister Shirra," Rab says, addressing me, "all the folk in the country-side seem

to ken me, although I could swear I never seen them between the een afore."

"Mister Jock Myles," he says, turning to the man again, "you appear to ken me. I dinna' ken you; but I have got a by-ord'nar fine character o' you from Dauvid Shirra here, who's a son o' Mister Shirra in the Excise — whom ye may have heard o'.

"Now," says he, "I've come up to the Bowes for my wife, to take her back to St Brise, and the stray in my cart is hard for a nice woman like her to sit in, . . . and, in a word, can ye give me a pickle fresh stuff in its place?

"The auld'll do brawly for your reed," says he; "an' I'll neiver wi' ye — a pickle fresh stray for a cairt-load o' auld, — and, it may be, the best o' the bargain's with you all the same."

With that, and without by-your-leave of Jock, he lets down the back of the cart, and would have begun to unload it. I bent to help, but he stopped me in a moment.

"Nay," he says, "you maun watch the mare." He gave me the reins. "Can you manage, think you? Huts! It's not so easy. She tak's a power o' watching, though ye wouldna think it to see me drive her; so you maun not let your eyes off her lugs."

So saying, he backed the cart against the reed dyke, and I sat and watched the mare's lugs; and in a minute the cart was empty of the old straw, and Jock was pitchforking into it a fine layer of new. Then

Rab gets up beside me, and takes the reins.

"Good day to ye, and thank ye," he says to Jock Myles; and Jock was red in the face with laughing. "Good day to ye, and thank ye," and drives off.

"Mr Myles, or whatsoever they call you," he cries, looking back over his shoulder, "I'm greatly obliged to you for your stray; but I cannot help saying that ye keep a deplorable dirty reed, and the quicker ye get it turned over the better."

And with that he gives a cackle and a low whistle, like a bird that laughs in a whistle, and drives out of Jock Myles's.

"I'm not sure, Mister Dauvid, if I've done right in being obliged to that man," he said to me by-and-by.

"I told ye what like he was," I answered, "and 'out o' the eater,' says you."

"Ay, man," he says, looking at me very queerly, "and, by the same authority, there's a power o' mischief in the jaw-bone of an ass."

It may very well be that but for the downsetting I got when I made the unlucky mention of Rab at a time when my father was feeling the sting of having married above him, I should have spoken at home of this visit to Jock Myles; and it may be that, had I done so, the result would have been the discovery of something more than hard straw in the reed, and a supervisorship at the least for my father. As it was, I held my tongue, cherishing the recollection of Rab's won-

derful spirits on that drive, and a high opinion of the man which the general, vague character he held could not affect now. I do not say that, away from him, I had any respect for him: he tickled a natural curiosity, and all they said against him did that; but when I was with him, I know, he held me by a spell.

I am certain that nothing save the thought of seeing something of Rab reconciled me to the idea of a session at Mr Foster's school in St Brise, and a year's lodging with my mother's sister, Miss Sarah Trail. The school had a reputation for discipline, if I can call that a reputation which was an experience through which most folks in St Brise had passed or were passing; and when my Aunt Sarah condescended to call upon us in Town of Tarvit, to discuss the terms of my board, she was particular in dwelling upon the rigorous methods of herself and Mr Foster in contradistinction to the spoiled manner in which, she was good enough to explain, I had been brought up by my widowed father. But for Rab's face on the horizon, the prospect had not been very welcome.

One day at the end of August, then, my father brought me to St Brise, and left me in lee of my Aunt Sarah. He had not been gone three hours when I slipped her convoy, and set out on a voyage of discovery of Rab. He dwelt, I had it, at the harbour end of the long street of St Brise, and thither I directed my steps; and I had traversed two hundred yards or so only, and emerged from a dark passage of

the causeway upon a more open space, with houses set back upon one side, when I ran fairly in the face of the man whom I was seeking.

To this day I cannot determine whether he saw me as soon as I saw him. He was coming jauntily along, whistling lowly within himself, as his manner was, so that it was not until you were close upon him that you heard any sound, and then it was round and full. If he did not see me (of which I am not so assured as I was at the time), I can only say that it was not like him: there was not much that he passed over. If he did see me, he let me pluck his coat, which I did timidly, before he bent his eyes in my way. Even then he appeared not to remember me until I said—

“Don't you remember driving me to Jock Myles's, at the Back Bowes, Mr Cook?”

He had a trick or habit (derived from his tailoring, maybe) of straightening himself up and blinking his eye, like one who has been awakened from sleep to urgent business; and he played it now.

“And whaur have you dropped from, Mr Dauvid Shirra?” he asked, laying a hand upon my shoulder, which was almost as high as his own now.

“I am newly come down from Tower of Tarvit—this very day,” I answered. “I am going to Foster's school.”

“Ay, ay!” says he. “And living?”

“With my Aunt Sarah.”

“Oh, ho! oh, ho! Genteel!”

“You have a good memory to mind me,” he says next.

"I'll never forget that ride," I answered.

"No," he says; "I haven't forgot it myself. And yon man—Jock—Jock what was't? Is he still about the Bowes?"

"I believe so. I haven't seen him myself, but my father tells me he's aye there and at his old tricks."

"Poaching, wasn't it?"

"Smuggling," says I.

"Dearie me! And was not your father angry wi' me for taking ye to Jock Myles—to change my stray?"

"Oh, I never tell'd him about the ride," I said.

"No: and how was that?"

Now the reason for my not telling was as I have explained; and I grew red and confused when he asked for it. It seemed to me that even although I did not speak of it, he must have an inkling of its drift: he must count me ungrateful, I felt, for even knowing it. And I was far from ungrateful.

"It was the grandest ride I ever had," I was forced to splutter out.

"Mister Dauvid," he said—and this is the speech I can least forgive him—"I should not have asked you that question, for it was too delicate for answering. I see ye have heard ill o' me; and I see, as weel, that you have not found me so ill as my repute."

"I have found you . . ." I cried, my heart welling up with a pity for the man, and still more with pride at these strange relations with him; but he broke in again.

"I thank you for your friendship," says he, with a working of his lips. "I thank you for your friendship—long may I merit it! And, now, there's just one thing I will say about that," says he. "I ken the big heart that's in ye—an odd thing to be found joined with so much gumption—and it's as like as not you'll be for declaring this friendship to all and sundry. Dauvid," he says, "it's not one that'll raise you in public esteem, and the only service the declaration o't 'll do to me is to have it broken off. So, Dauvid my man, the soul o' me is knit unto your soul, like the soul o' Jonathan to his Dauvid—but under the thoomb, lad, under the thoomb. . . . Is't a compact?"

I felt (as doubtless he intended that I should feel) that all this proceeded from his delicacy, and from a desire, as well, to retain me as a friend, which, I knew well, he could not do if our being acquainted came to Aunt Sarah's ears. And, besides that this tickled my pride very nicely, something in it made bubble up in me a pity at which I was very apt at this time. So it was with some emotion that I seized his hand to shake it over our compact.

"So, so, but we'll not fall on each other's necks after the manner of old: not just here," he says, looking east and west the street. "But come, ye maun call on Charlotte."

And with that he turns, and brings me to his own door.

SKINNER OF SKINNER'S HORSE.

A CENTURY ago, ere yet the British red had spread over any but scattered portions of the map of India, the great peninsula between the Bay of Bengal and the Indian Ocean offered a fine field to all reckless spirits who had daring sufficient to wander over it in quest of fortune or adventure. Those were the days when the "mohur-tree" still shook its golden harvest into the coffers of John Company and his servants; when the exiled Briton at Calcutta or Madras drowned thoughts of home in copious libations of bottled beer and four-finger brandy pegs; when the life of Europeans in India had no relief from sweltering heat, awful insanitariness, and still more horrible debaucheries. The cadet who at the close of the eighteenth century sailed from England for the East was confronted by a hundred-to-one chance against his ever returning home; but he was also comforted by the reflection that if good fortune should select him to be amongst the favoured survivors, he might retire to nurse his gout and dyspepsia at Bath or Cheltenham, with his pockets well filled, an object of the keenest interest and solicitude to all his poor relations. Those, too, were rare days for military adventurers, the needy *uitlanders* of every nationality, who, despite the jealousy and hostility of the Honourable Company, nevertheless frequently man-

aged to achieve position, influence, and fortune in the service of the great States of India. The Mogul empire was in its death-throes; the wretched puppet who sat on the throne of Akbar was practically a prisoner in the hands of one faction of the Mahrattas, and served but to give a fancied prestige to the cause of his masters in the constant internecine struggle amongst the rival kinsmen. North of the Sutlej militant Sikhism had broken from the hated rule of the Moslem, and under Ranjit Singh the armies of the Khalsa defied all claims of suzerainty. The steadily increasing power of the English in the Western Deccan and in Bengal foreshadowed an inevitable struggle at no distant date with the unruly Mahratta hordes; but the latter were too much divided against themselves to make preparation to meet the coming danger or to unite against the common foe. Sindhia, Holkar, or the Peshwar had no thoughts or aims but to acquire supremacy one over the others, and in the unceasing struggle they turned for assistance to those very Western races whose superior powers of organisation and command were so shortly to be exercised against themselves. The names of De Boigne and Perron are known to all students of Indian history; the story of Alexander Gardiner has not long since been made familiar to readers of 'Maga';

Martine is a name of honoured memory in Calcutta and Lucknow, where great scholastic institutions owe their origin to his charity; but none of these soldiers of fortune is so intimately connected with the British arms in India, nor did any leave more lasting memorial of his achievements, than Colonel James Skinner, C.B., of "Skinner's Horse," the founder of the Bengal Irregular Cavalry.

The career of this remarkable man is a noticeable instance of the triumph of sheer merit over adverse circumstances. Not only had he to meet the exclusive officialdom of the Company without the *cachet* of either cadetship or the king's commission, but he had also to combat a more serious disadvantage in the strong prejudice of those days against all persons of mixed descent. For Skinner was a half-caste, and the grit and force of character which he displayed through life were the more remarkable in one brought up in the unhealthy surroundings which are inevitable in the lives of children in Anglo-Indian cities.

His father was an officer in the Company's service, who, as an ensign in Clive's army, married a young Rajput girl captured in one of the campaigns in Bengal. Such unions, now fortunately rare, were common enough in those days: they can have seldom brought lasting happiness or content to either party, and the Skinners' household seems to have been no exception in this respect. James Skinner's published Memoirs tell us little of either his

father or his mother; but they relate with tragic simplicity, not unmixed with pathos, how the latter committed suicide when her young daughters were taken from her and sent to school, preferring death to the dishonour which she conceived had fallen on her house by such a violation of the privacy of the zenana.

James Skinner was one of a family of six children, and was born in the year 1778. After such schooling as Calcutta could offer, or as his father could afford, he was at the age of eighteen bound apprentice to a printer in the Bengal capital. But so sedentary a calling was little in accord with his adventurous spirit, and after only three days in the printing-house he ran away, with the intention of going to sea. Captured before he could effect this purpose, and brought home by an uncle, he was given a trial in a counting-house, but with equally unsatisfactory result. At the end of three months it became evident to his guardians at Calcutta that some more active life must be found for his restless energies. The commissioned ranks of the Company's service were closed to him by reason of his birth and his father's circumstances, and the only opening which remained was the service of one of the native princes of India. To this resource, which at least offered a career of adventure, and the possible chance of achieving fortune, Skinner accordingly turned. Leaving Calcutta, he journeyed up country to Cawnpore, where

his father was serving with his regiment, and having obtained a letter of introduction to General De Boigne, he presented himself before that distinguished Savoyard at Koel in June 1796, and besought an appointment in the army of Sindhia. Benoit de Boigne was at this time at the close of his active career, and was about to relinquish the command which he had held so long. Born at Chamberi in Savoy, he early entered on a life of varied excitement. After some service in the famous Irish Brigade of the French army, a few years in the Russian forces, and captivity and slavery in the hands of the Turks, De Boigne made his way to India in 1778, and not long afterwards entered the service of Madaji Sindhia. This prince he served well and faithfully until Madaji's death in 1794. He successfully organised a part of the Mahratta army in the European manner and under the command of European officers, and it was to the efficiency of his regular brigade that Sindhia owed the superiority which before the close of the eighteenth century he had established over the other Mahratta chiefs. An important item in De Boigne's astute military policy was to keep the peace between his master and the English, nor was it until Madaji was succeeded by the young and headstrong Daulat Rao Sindhia that this wise course was departed from. De Boigne then, finding that his counsels were disregarded, and foreseeing that the

overthrow of the Mahrattas must be the result, sought permission to retire, and in the autumn of 1796 he marched down to Calcutta escorted by his personal bodyguard of 600 Persian horsemen, magnificently mounted and equipped. The whole of this corps he handed over to the service of the British, receiving from Lord Cornwallis, then Governor-General, the sum of 350,000 rupees (£35,000) for the horses and equipment. He then took ship for France, where he passed the remainder of his days in affluent retirement in his native Savoy.

As has been seen, then, Skinner's arrival in De Boigne's camp at Koel preceded by only a few months the final retirement of the latter from the Mahratta service. The general received the young adventurer with kindness, and forthwith gave him an ensign's commission in Colonel Sutherland's regular brigade stationed at Muttra. Thither Skinner at once proceeded, and was posted to an infantry battalion commanded by a certain Captain Pohlman.

For the next seven years, during which time he remained in the Mahratta service, his life was passed continually in camps, and his taste for stirring scenes was fully satisfied amidst the ceaseless warfare between the Mahrattas and their neighbours. Excellent as was the system introduced by De Boigne, and efficient as were the regular brigades of Sindhia's army when compared with the undisciplined mobs which repre-

sented the military forces of most native States, yet it may well be imagined that the character of the motley crowd of adventurers who held commissions, as well as the natural dislike for discipline by the lawless troops they commanded, precluded any but a rough-and-ready style of organisation, and a very elastic control over the soldiery. Life in the Mahratta camps of those days must indeed have resembled in no small degree medieval warfare in Europe: the armies composed of independent contingents furnished by feudal lords, each jealous of the other, and scarcely less hostile to one another than to the avowed enemies of their suzerain chief. Of this curious and stirring life we are fortunate in finding some faithful pictures in Skinner's own *Memoirs*,¹ which were collected and published after his death by his intimate friend James Baillie Fraser, and which, albeit somewhat rambling and confused as to the sequence of events, nevertheless contain much that is graphic and interesting, while the effect of the narrative is heightened by the simplicity and naiveté of the language. No better instance can be found, illustrative of the manners of the soldier chiefs, of the varied experiences which lay in the path of foreign adventurers, and of the quaint unvarnished manner in which Skinner's story is told, than in the following episode of the very first

campaign in which he took part.

Daulat Rao Sindhia was at war with a recalcitrant follower named Lakwa Dada, and the forces of the former, among which was Pohlman's regiment, with young Skinner as one of its junior officers, were commanded by a general named Ambaji Sindhia. It chanced that in the camp of Ambaji was one Harji Sindhia, a relative of Daulat Rao, who had incurred the enmity of his own commander, and at the same time was an object of peculiar dislike to Lakwa Dada. Forgetting their public hostility in the intensity of their personal animosity, the two leaders combined in a treacherous plot to compass the death of the victim of their common hatred. It was arranged that Harji should be sent out from Ambaji's camp attended by only a small following, with orders to reconnoitre a certain road: meanwhile Lakwa Dada was to prepare an ambush of overwhelming strength, by which the unsuspecting chief should be destroyed. The treacherous combination of the two hostile generals was duly completed; but it so happened that as Harji left Ambaji's camp on the errand which was intended to lead to his doom he was joined by young Skinner, who, having no other duty on hand, attached himself to the reconnaissance as a volunteer. In those Homeric combats the

¹ Military Memoirs of Lieut.-Colonel James Skinner. By J. Baillie Fraser. (Smith, Elder, & Co., 1851. Out of print.)

event was frequently determined more by the presence of two or three principals than by a score or so of ill-armed rank and file; and so, when the hostile party emerged from their ambush to fall on the unsuspecting Harji, the assistance of James Skinner was sufficient to put an unexpected complexion on the result. These two were able to offer so vigorous a resistance that they succeeded in putting heart into their followers, who had been at first dismayed by the suddenness of the onslaught, and eventually the assailants, unprepared for such a determined struggle, were beaten off and put to flight. When, after a hard fight, the victors returned safely to camp, Harji, throwing himself into the arms of his companion, embraced him as his preserver, and insisted on his acceptance of a pair of gold bangles, a sword, a shield, and a fine horse, in recognition of his gallantry. The sequel, as told in Skinner's simple language, speaks volumes on the dangers of service under such masters:—

“Colonel Sutherland, who had heard the whole circumstance, and also that I had been with Hurjee [*sic*], now sent for me, and I related to him all that had happened, explained how I had chanced to accompany him, and showed him the present I had received. He blamed me for what had passed, and told me that he should report to Perron (De Boigne's successor) the circumstance of my accompanying the Mahratta chief without orders. On returning to my tent it was intimated to me that if I would give the horse which I had got, which was a noble animal, to the colonel, he would say nothing of what had happened to Perron. To

this I replied that I might give the bangles, but with the sword, the shield, and the horse I would not part; and though several schemes were had recourse to by Colonel Sutherland in order to obtain the animal, he did not succeed in depriving me of him.”

It may be added that no untoward consequences seem to have resulted to Skinner from the affair, possibly because of the fact that Colonel Sutherland was shortly afterwards dismissed by Perron for intriguing with the Mahratta chiefs.

Such were the people among whom Skinner obtained his military training, and such the scenes in the midst of which his life was passed for the next seven years. That his skill in arms and his daring resource in peril were developed to a high degree of perfection is less remarkable than the fact that the intrigue and treachery which were common amongst his fellows were unable to corrupt the singular straightness and openness of his own character. The guerilla warfare in which he was constantly engaged while in the Mahratta service was of no historic interest except in so far as it eventually led to the final struggle between his employer and the English; nor is it necessary to dwell on the events of the years which elapsed between the young soldier's first campaign and that which was his last service in the army of Daulat Rao Sindhia. The latter campaign is worthy of mention because in its course Skinner was present at the downfall of Rajah George

Thomas, one of the strangest of the many remarkable characters to be found at the close of the eighteenth century amongst the soldiers of fortune in India.

An Irishman of the lowest birth, and entirely uneducated, George Thomas arrived in Madras in 1780 as a common sailor on a merchant-vessel. There, attracted by the marvellous tales of the wealth to be acquired in this land of romance, he deserted from his ship and made his way inland. Alone and entirely ignorant of the countries through which he had to pass, or of the languages of their peoples, he yet succeeded, after months of wandering and many adventures, in reaching the imperial capital of Delhi. Here he attached himself to the so-called Begum Sumroo, a personage whose history was as remarkable as his own, and who was at this time one of the most influential of the many small potentates established round the decaying court of the Moguls. For some years Thomas lived as a dependant of the Begum, over whom he acquired considerable ascendancy, regulating her affairs and commanding her forces. He also for a time took service under the Mahrattas, with whom he extended his experience of war. With them too, as with the Begum Sumroo, he was careful to increase his wealth, in proportion to his growing influence and reputation as a commander. For, strange as it must appear, he developed considerable military powers, which probably de-

pended on audacity and determination, two very potent items of success in oriental warfare, rather than on any more intellectual qualities. His ambition, however, was by no means to be satisfied by the post of adviser or military commander in the pay of Indian princelings, and his growing fame and fortune were constantly regarded by Thomas merely as a means towards the end, which he ever kept in view, of establishing himself as an independent ruler. When, after a shorter space of time than would have seemed possible, his resources warranted his making the attempt, he attached to himself a body of desperate adherents, seized a considerable tract of country north-east of Delhi, and rebuilt and fortified the ruined town of Hansi, which was in the midst of his territory. Here he proceeded to consolidate his position, raising and training military forces, constructing gun-foundries, establishing a mint and issuing a coinage. Successful in his first enterprises, it was not long before he sought to increase his power: he undertook a series of operations against the neighbouring potentates, and even had the audacity to advance to the Sutlej and invade the territories of the Lion of the Punjab. In short, so great was his success and so rapid the growth of his power that he seemed in a fair way to accomplish the dream which had long been the avowed aim of his efforts. This was no less than to conquer the Sikhs, to plant the British standard on the walls of At-

tock, and then, sailing down the Indus to Kurrachee, to take ship to England, and to lay the sovereignty of the Punjab at the feet of his Majesty King George III. A lofty ambition this for a common Irish sailor, so illiterate that he could not write his own name! But hare-brained though it may seem to us to-day, they were nevertheless dreams such as these, and men of the dauntless audacity and determination of George Thomas to carry them through, which have made the British empire what it is.

In an unfortunate moment, however, for the success of his enterprises, Thomas provoked the hostility of Daulat Rao Sindhia and of General Perron; and so it came about that, as we have seen, the autumn of 1801 found James Skinner with his regiment in the Mahratta camp over against Georgeghur, in the district of Hansi, under whose walls lay the army of Rajah Thomas. Here a bloody and indecisive battle was fought — the severest, Skinner declares, that he had ever seen — in which the Mahratta forces lost between 3000 and 4000 killed and wounded, and Thomas over 2000. Finding himself hard pressed and his resources failing, the latter retreated on the 10th November to Hansi, sixty miles distant, where he made his final stand. The attack on that place was again marked by desperate fighting on both sides. In the assault, which was made on the 3rd December, the Mahratta forces were divided into three columns, one of

which was commanded by James Skinner and another by his younger brother Robert. The former was opposed by one of Thomas's captains, named Birch; and the following quaint description from Skinner's pen gives a curious picture of warfare in India a hundred years ago:—

“Birch defended his post well, and beat me back twice with great loss. Burning choppers, powder-pots, and everything he could get hold of were showered upon us; but our greatest loss was from the powder-pots, which greatly disheartened the men. However, after a desperate struggle I drove them from the breach. Just as I had got up, I saw Birch about twenty yards from me taking aim at me with a double-barrelled gun, the contents of which (both barrels) he fired at me; but ‘the sweet little cherub’ saved me from them. I immediately levelled my javelin, and putting my shield to my breast, darted it at him and took off his hat, on which he set off and joined his men.”

Thomas was driven finally to take refuge in the fort; but he still maintained the unequal struggle with his powerful enemies, until it became evident that all hope of retrieving his position was gone. He was then at length prevailed on to accept favourable terms, and marched out of Hansi with the honours of war. He proceeded at once towards the British territories with such of his portable wealth as he had preserved, intending to make his way to England; but he was overtaken by severe illness on his way to Calcutta, and died at Berhampore in the spring of 1802, at the age of forty-six years.

The campaign against George Thomas was (as has been said) almost the last active service in which Skinner took part in company with the forces of Sindhia. The jealousies between the principal Mahratta chiefs had for some years past been constantly on the increase. The former possessions of the Peshwar were now divided amongst half-a-dozen rivals, and the dismemberment of the Mahratta confederacy before the steadily advancing front of the British was inevitable. Sindhia, thanks largely to the genius of De Boigne, had acquired a commanding position amongst the Mahratta princes, as well as the prestige of being the so-called protector of the wretched old man who represented the empire of the Moguls. So long as De Boigne commanded his trained forces, that astute adviser had succeeded in diverting his master's mind from the idea of trying conclusions with the British. But Perron, less far-seeing, did nothing to postpone the inevitable struggle. Sindhia himself, elated by his easy ascendancy over the forces of his other enemies, was only too ready to enter on a quarrel which would, he thought, prove more profitable than the constant wars with his fellow-countrymen. An opportunity was not long wanting. Difficulties between the Mahratta prince and the British became prominent early in 1803, and in the summer of the same year war between the two Powers broke out.

At the outset of hostilities

all British subjects in the service of Sindhia, including such "country-borns" of British extraction as the two Skinners, were ordered to give up their appointments and to leave the army. The majority of them made their way to the camp of General Lake, the British commander-in-chief, where some of them took service. Skinner, however, though well received in the British camp and immediately offered employment, generously refused to bear arms against his former master. But Fortune was not long in declaring herself against Sindhia. Within a few weeks of the opening of the campaign, the defeat of the Mahrattas was followed by the ignominious flight of General Perron. His example was followed by most of the Europeans who remained in the service of the Mahrattas; and the trained cavalry, who were largely composed of mercenaries from Rohilkhand and Oudh, finding themselves without leaders, deserted in considerable numbers to the British. Lord Lake was willing enough to avail himself of this accession of strength in an arm as useful as it was difficult to procure; and the men, in accepting service, made a request that James Skinner, who seems to have remained in the British camp, should be appointed to command them. Under these circumstances Skinner consented to accept employment, satisfying his honourable scruples by the stipulation that he should never be required to serve directly against Sindhia.

A corps of 2000 men, thenceforth to be known as Skinner's Horse, was thus enrolled in the British forces, and the regiment so formed still holds the honourable position of senior cavalry corps of the Bengal army, under the title of the 1st Bengal Lancers.

From the above it will be seen that the events which led up to the employment of James Skinner in the British service were entirely beyond his control, and the result was indeed contrary both to his wishes and prejudices. When the war broke out he had, as his biographer tells us, no idea of departing from his allegiance to Sindhia. His father had lately died, and no tie therefore remained sufficiently strong to draw him from the life, the friends, and the service to which he owed all that he had in the world. He was half a native by birth, and almost wholly so by training, associations, and manner of life; and even if his sympathies had not been strongly engaged on the side of the Mahrattas, the service of the exclusive East India Company held out to him no chance of honourable advancement.

Nevertheless the sequel proved that, contrary to his anticipations, a successful and fairly lucrative career was open to him in the Company's army. The moment was an auspicious one for the entry into that service of an efficient cavalry leader, backed by a considerable body of well-trained horsemen. Lord Lake found himself engaged in a contest with powerful antagonists, remarkable for

their excellence in that arm in which his forces were most deficient. The only cavalry in the service of the Company at this time were a few regiments of regular troopers of very doubtful value. Dressed up in the tight European uniforms of that day, and officered entirely by Englishmen, both in commissioned and non-commissioned ranks, these regular regiments were not only unserviceable by reason of their immobility, but they were not recruited from the classes which have always supplied the best fighting material in India. As had been written forty years before, "The Moguls will never submit to the ill-treatment they receive from gentlemen unaccustomed with their manners and custom." Still less would they endure the harsh treatment and coarse language to which the troopers were subjected from uneducated non-commissioned officers. The consequence was, that the native cavalry regiments, instead of being recruited from among the well-to-do families of Rohilkhand and Oudh, were filled with the off-scourings of the bazaars, the lowest riff-raff from Lucknow and Cawnpore. The authorities could not but be conscious of the inferiority of such troops, and it was therefore not surprising that a force of 2000 horsemen, well trained, inured to war, and, moreover, mounted and equipped at their own expense, was a very welcome addition to Lord Lake's army.

During the remainder of the campaign against Sindhia, James Skinner, with his newly

raised horse, was employed in the districts between Aligarh and Delhi, where he was successful in reducing the local chieftains to obedience, and gained the warm approval both of Sir David Ochterlony, the Resident at Delhi, and of Lord Lake himself, for the skill and energy with which he conducted the operations.

In the early summer of 1804 the defeat of Daulat Rao Sindhia was followed by the commencement of operations against Holkar, who was second only to Sindhia amongst the Mahratta princes. The opening of this new campaign was marked by a disaster which up to that time and for many years afterwards was unparalleled in the story of the British arms in India. The direction of the operations was for the time left in the hands of Brigadier Monson, who with singular rashness allowed himself to be led on by a feigned retreat, until, separated by a great distance from his base, without adequate supplies, and supported only by a small force of cavalry, of which three-fourths proved unreliable, he found himself suddenly confronted by the whole of Holkar's army. He endeavoured to fall back; but his steps were dogged by the thousands of Mahratta horsemen, who daily inflicted terrible loss on the discouraged and jaded British troops. The retreat began early in July some distance south of Kotah in Central India, and it was not until the 31st August that the remnants of Monson's brigade, in terror-stricken and disorganised detachments, found

safety within the walls of Agra fort.

Meanwhile the news of the retreat had brought Lord Lake in all haste from Cawnpore, and as soon as might be the whole army was collected at Agra, whence it moved to Muttra. But for some time it was impossible for want of supplies to take the field against Holkar's victorious forces, and in the weeks of delay Skinner's Horse, which, fortunately for them, had not formed part of Monson's ill-fated brigade, were invaluable in engaging scattered bodies of the enemy and in securing supplies for the troops. Skinner's crowning achievement at this period was the successful recovery of an immense convoy of 60,000 bullocks laden with grain, which was seized on its way from Cawnpore by an ally of the Mahrattas. The convoy carried the food-supply for the army for seven days: without it no movement could be made from Muttra; and it was of the greatest importance that an advance should be made without delay on Delhi, where the small British garrison was being hard pressed by Holkar's force. No wonder, then, that when, after an absence of twenty-four hours, Skinner arrived in camp with the whole of the convoy under his protection, he received a very warm welcome from the commander-in-chief. "He shook me by the hand," writes the old soldier in his Memoir, "and taking the sword he wore at his own waist, he presented it to me with 20,000 rupees."

It was in such service as this that the irregular horsemen

of that time were most commonly employed: they were, in truth, the eyes, the ears, the feelers, and the *feeders* of the army, with its ponderous train of baggage and heavy guns; and throughout the war against Holkar, Skinner's Horse again and again proved their superiority over the enormous swarms of Mahratta cavalry, who, but for Skinner's activity, would in all likelihood have starved Lord Lake's army out of the field.

Towards the end of the war the corps formed part of a large force of cavalry, regular and irregular, which pursued and routed the celebrated Pathan freebooter, Amir Khan, the most efficient of Holkar's allies. In this affair James Skinner, disguised as a native, penetrated the enemy's camp, spent a night there, and then returning to his own force, guided them to the point of attack at a favourable moment, and fell on the foe with such success as to effectually break Amir Khan's power for the rest of the war. An extract from Skinner's account of the action gives yet another description of such combats a hundred years ago:—

“Meer Khan in person charged my corps on the left with a large *gole*.¹ My men behaved most gallantly, giving fire with their matchlocks at the word of command, and then drawing swords, they charged and repulsed them with great slaughter: we killed two of their sirdars, took one prisoner, with ten stand of colours, among which were two golden ones, carried by *ackas*,² and 200 horses.”

The first Mahratta war was now approaching a conclusion. During the remaining opera-

tions, which included the unsuccessful siege of Bhartpur and the pursuit of Holkar across the Sutlej, Skinner's Horse was prominent in those duties which, as has been said above, were rightly considered to be the particular province of irregular cavalry; but the corps did not take part in any action of sufficient importance to require detailed description.

Early in 1806 the army broke up. The conclusion of the war, and the relief of Lord Wellesley by Lord Cornwallis as Governor-General, were the signal for very considerable retrenchments in military expenditure and reductions of the standing forces. Skinner's Horse, notwithstanding its valuable services, did not escape the hand of the financial reformer, and, contrary to the urgent representations of Lord Lake, the whole force was disbanded except Skinner's *khas risala* or personal troop, 300 horsemen strong, which, thanks to the influence of the Commander-in-Chief, was retained for civil duties under the Resident of Delhi, Sir David Ochterlony, with headquarters at George Thomas's old capital of Hansi.

But the peace which had been patched up with the Mahratta princes was not such an arrangement as could ensure lasting tranquillity, a fact which was evident at the time to all the most far-seeing men in India. Not only was Bhartpur still unsubdued, and, indeed, declared by the British themselves to be unassailable; not only was the power of Holkar only scotched

¹ *Gole* = compact body.

² *Acka* = *aga*, a leader.

and not killed; but where the authority of the Mahratta chiefs had been removed, no adequate rule had been substituted, and the country was given up to the unchecked depredations of the hordes of freebooters, whose numbers were swelled from the beaten armies of Sindhia, Holkar, and the free-lance Amir Khan. As time passed on, the daring of these robbers, the Pindaris of Central and Western India, rapidly increased; the scenes of their outrages were extended; territories under the protection, or actually under the rule, of the East India Company were not spared; until in 1814 their raids were the terror of the land from Kandesh to Nagpur, from Jeypur to Masulipatam. To check and destroy this terrible scourge, to reduce to order the chaotic anarchy existing in Central India, and to force a final and satisfactory settlement on the Mahratta princes, was the first aim of the Marquis of Hastings (then Lord Moira) on his arrival as Governor-General in 1813. His intention was delayed by the outbreak of the Nepal war; but no sooner was that arduous undertaking disposed of, than all the available forces of the British were assembled at convenient centres, and towards the close of 1817 the operations of the second Mahratta war began.

Meanwhile, so useful an officer as James Skinner had not been left unemployed. As early as 1814 he had been called on to raise a corps of 3000 horse, of which his *khas risala* at Delhi formed the nucleus; and when the grand army was assembled

for the Mahratta war, 2000 of this corps, under Skinner in person, were attached to the reserve division under General Ochterlony. There the duties of the irregular horse were again, as in the previous war, confined to foraging and scouting for the army, and to raids against scattered bodies of the enemy, amongst whom was Skinner's old opponent, Amir Khan. The memoirs of the corps present no noteworthy incident in the midst of many months of arduous and important service; but the value of retaining such a force for use whenever required was so clearly recognised, that at the close of the operations Skinner's Horse was not disbanded as on the previous occasion, but formed into two permanent corps of 1000 each, of which one was commanded by James Skinner in person, with the local rank of lieutenant-colonel, while his younger brother Robert, with the rank of major, received the command of the other, which is now the 3rd Bengal Cavalry.

The mention of one more campaign will close the recital of Skinner's active career as a soldier. In 1825 Lord Combermere, then Commander-in-Chief in India, assembled an army to attack the redoubtable fortress of Bhartpur, which twenty years before had successfully withstood the attacks of Lord Lake's victorious army. Once more Skinner's Horse did invaluable service in repelling the attacks of predatory bands which hung on the outskirts of the army, and in securing the collection of supplies—tasks re-

quiring no less courage and dash than mobility and endurance. Once more the corps sustained its reputation as ideal irregular horse, and it was as a compliment to their prowess that, when the city walls had been effectually mined, the Commander-in-Chief called on them to furnish a party of 200 dismounted men to form part of the storming-party on the 18th January 1826. What followed in Skinner's camp may be told in his own words:—

“When I made known this order and called out for volunteers, the whole corps replied that if any selection were to be made they wished me to do it myself, as if left to their choice they would all go. This praiseworthy spirit left me no alternative. To avoid hurting the feelings of any one, I refrained from all selection, but ordered the party to be told off, agreeably to the roster of duty; but as I wanted a steady and experienced commandant to lead them, I placed at their head Shadull Khan, one of my oldest, most faithful, and trustworthy native officers; and on the evening previous to their joining the detachment of cavalry volunteers, I paraded this fine party and thus addressed them: ‘This is the first time of your going into danger when I cannot accompany you; but such is my affection for you all, that I cannot allow you to part from me without carrying with you something dear to me.’ Then taking by the hand my son James, whom, on the late augmentation, Government had permitted to enter my corps as adjutant, I went on: ‘See, here is my son! take him, and gain for him such laurels as you have won for the sire.’ On this the noble Shadull Khan, of whose valour I had often been an eyewitness, stepped forward, and taking my son by the arm, called aloud, in reply: ‘Farewell, our own commander; trust in God, who never deserts those faithful servants who do their duty, and who, please God,

will now do their utmost to maintain the honour of the corps.’”

James Skinner survived the siege and capture of Bhartpur for sixteen years; but though he continued to exercise command over his regiment, he saw no further active service, for the outbreak of the war with Afghanistan in 1839 found him too infirm to take the field. For the first time his beloved “Yellow Boys,” as they were called from the colour of their uniform, were obliged to join the army without the leader and founder of whom they had been so proud; but their conduct in the campaign in no way fell short of the best traditions of Skinner's Horse, and the news of their exploits cheered the last days of the veteran soldier. Before this, however, James Skinner had received full, though none too early, recognition of his services. Notwithstanding strenuous objections on the part of the Government at Calcutta, the fact of which is on record in a minute from the Court of Directors, dated the 27th March 1829, the substantive rank of a lieutenant-colonel in the army was given him in that year, and at the same time the king conferred on him the Companionship of the Bath, each of which honours was without precedent for persons of Skinner's birth and circumstances.

His last years were marked by deeds of charity and piety, which were the natural outcome of a singularly simple and open mind, not perhaps (as

indeed might be expected from his education and environment) quite unmixed with superstition. It is said that on one occasion, when lying wounded on the field of battle, he vowed that should he survive and ever attain to wealth, he would found a Christian church in the imperial city of Delhi. This promise he lived to fulfil, and much of his savings was spent on the votive church, dedicated to his patron saint, which stands within the Kashmir gate of Delhi, and which in later years has acquired fresh interest as the resting-place of many of the heroes of the Mutiny.

A touching episode of Skinner's declining years is told about the death of his favourite charger, which had borne him through Lake's wars, and whose staunchness had on one occasion saved his life in an encounter with the Sikhs. The horse had been pensioned and kept in idleness for many years, when "one morning he broke away from his head and heel ropes, and ran up to the window of the bungalow at Hansee where Skinner was sitting, neighed loudly, and dropped down dead, as much as to say, 'My end is near; I am come to take a last farewell.'"

James Skinner died at Hansi on the 4th December 1841 at the age of sixty-three years, and, after a temporary burial at that place, his body was carried into Delhi, where in January 1842 it was buried with much ceremony under the altar of the church which he had built.

Skinner's character was remarkable not so much for the pre-eminence of his good qualities, prominent though they were, as for the fact that he was so free from the failings which are unfortunately too common amongst people of his birth. But his name is remembered more by reason of what he accomplished than for his personal merits. It is true that the use of irregular horsemen, whether by the British or in native armies, was no new thing in India in the early years of last century; but Skinner was the first to train these men, cavalry soldiers born and bred, to such a degree of perfection as to fit them as much for the duties of regular troops as for the work—more usual at that period for such men—of undisciplined and marauding mercenaries. By careful recruiting and efficient instruction he made them indeed worthy to be retained in the ranks of the army, instead of being employed for the duration of a campaign only, and then dismissed, as the transport or other necessary accompaniments of camp-life might be dismissed. "The superiority of your corps rests upon a foundation which no others have," wrote Sir John Malcolm to Skinner. "Your rissaldars are men, generally speaking, not only of character, but of family; those under them are not only their military but their natural dependants." And again: "You armed them, understand their characters, enter into their prejudices; can encourage them, without spoiling them; know

what they can, and, what is more important, *cannot* do"; but he adds, "You have gone to the *very verge* of making bad regulars of admirable irregulars." These sentences contain the true essence of the ideal irregular cavalry leader. With such aims as these the Bengal irregular cavalry were first raised; with similar aims the regiments of the Punjab were formed at the crisis of 1857 by Hodson, Cureton, and Murray; and in a like spirit the whole of the Bengal cavalry was remodelled at the close of the Mutiny campaigns. But can any one who knows the Indian cavalry of to-day claim that they would still satisfy the critical eye of a Skinner or a Hodson? or is it certain that our modern reformers have stopped short of the extra step which makes good irregulars into bad regulars? Thirteen years ago the appointment of Inspector-General of Cavalry in India was first instituted; such an appointment was badly needed, and the result to the army generally has been markedly good. But it cannot be denied that the annual visit of the Inspector-General has resulted in efforts to attain a very high standard of proficiency in the exercises of the parade-ground and the riding-school, to the detriment of the dash and self-reliance which were in old days the peculiar characteristics of our Indian cavalry. Can any Bengal cavalry officer (with the possible exception of the Guides and one or two Punjab cavalry regiments) conscientiously say that these char-

acteristics are still true of our sowars of to-day? It is much to be feared that this is not so. The Bengal cavalry soldier will gallop over a measured distance within a second of the regulation pace; he will go through the lance-exercise with the precision of a British lancer; he will even on occasion perform a musical ride with the accuracy (almost) of his Majesty's Life Guards; at outpost practice he will be able to repeat without fault the orders for vedettes, and will give you his number, the number of his picket, and the probable position of an impossible enemy without faltering, and with the correctness of a poodle doing its tricks: but set him to reconnoitre over the rocky kopjes and wooded river-banks of Natal, and it is to be feared that he would show himself to be no longer the natural scout of the Mahratta wars, and would not be far behind trooper Thomas Atkins in blundering into traps and falling a victim to a more wily enemy.

It is to be hoped, then, that one of the first results of our lessons in South Africa will be to restore to us the ideal irregular cavalry of which the material is in danger of being spoiled beneath our hands. While recognising that the requirements of to-day are far in excess of those of 1803 or even of 1857, let us not forget Sir John Malcolm's warning to Skinner, and guard against making the finest irregulars in the world into bad regulars.

A RECTOR'S STORY.

WE were sitting, a party of four,—one of whom was the Rector,—on a hill, or rather a green mound, looking down into one of those secluded valleys which are still to be found in the retired parts of Surrey, shut in by wooded hills, thick with hazel copse, and alternating with small steep fields of corn and pasture, tangled hedgerows, and almost always, as in this case, watered by a running stream rambling over its shingly bed, and joining its musical ripple to the chorus of birds which were in full song,—for the time was April, and its life was making itself felt and seen in every breath of the west wind, and in every spray and leaf on which the afternoon sun fell in glittering light.

The valley was so narrow that you could almost have thrown a stone across to the sloping hillside opposite, and it appeared at first sight quite shut in where the mingled wood and copse came down and met on either side; but the stream had made its way through, proving an outlet somewhere, and immediately below us it spread into a wide pond, on the farther side of which stood a water-mill with an old cottage. The great wheel was silent to-day, and the water was running through the open sluices into the stream below, for it was Sunday.

The cottage, built partly of timber set in plaster, and part-

ly of "weather tiling," was old and roomy, with a roof many-coloured with yellow and orange lichens, while the brickwork had acquired that charming tint of soft warm grey that only age can give. One or two apple-trees just reddening into bloom grew in the overgrown garden; tall ash-trees and a poplar or two stood out against the yellowing western sky, which was full of light; while all along the margin of the water the green undergrowth was starred with the golden flowers of the marsh marigold; beds of "ladies' smocks" "all silver white," grew close to the edge; and higher up in the wood where the copse had been cleared was spread a sheet of blue, where myraids of blue-bells had sprung up, looking as if a patch of the sky had fallen to the earth.

The party who were looking down on the scene consisted of the Rector and his Curate, and two friends of a younger generation who had come from London the evening before as guests, to spend a "clean Sunday."

The Rector, who held one of the most delightful of South-country livings, was in the habit of entertaining such guests from Saturday till Monday. He gave an open invitation to such of the sons of old friends or relations who were beginning their career of work in London, who did not think his bachelor house too dull to accept his hospitality.

One of these was myself, who for some months after my arrival in London found life all but insupportable, and who was thankful for a day in the country, which filled my lungs with pure air and my eyes with the familiar and dearly loved scenes for which they pined; and this apart from the enjoyment of the company of the host himself, one of the most delightful of companions.

We had not been talking much, but now a discussion arose between the Curate and the younger of the Rector's guests.

"It seems to me," the latter was saying, "that the Hodges and the Gileses who live in such places as this are all made on one pattern, or at most two, and that one would not know one from the other except from their outward appearance."

"And what are those two patterns on which so many of your fellow-creatures are made?" asked the Curate.

"Well, Hodge is drunk and Giles is sober; the drunken man is also a poacher; the sober man don't know how to read, but sends his children to school and works hard; but there is no special *character*, as we should call it, in either—nothing to interest one or to mark out one Hodge from another Hodge individually. So I can understand a man who takes orders finding that a town parish, with all its disagreeables, was a necessity to incite him to work."

I knew this was the kind of talk especially irritating to our host, acting upon him as an

immediate call to arms; accordingly before the Curate could answer he spoke.

"Who do you mean by Giles and Hodge? I don't know any persons hereabouts who have these names."

He knew perfectly well, of course, to whom the names pointed.

"I mean the labourers who live in parishes like this: they have no distinctive character, no individuality except the broad ones I have named."

"I don't like those *caste* names," said the Rector; "they do more to separate and bring ill-feeling between classes than the people who use them suppose. Why should men who labour in the fields be classified under the name of Hodge? It is, I believe, an accepted joke, but a hurtful one, because there is a world of contempt in it."

"I won't call them by that name, then; but what I say is surely true."

"That the labouring people living in country places like this—out of the world, as it is called—are without any individuality, without any of those finer traits of character which mark off those of higher social grade? I know some people think so. I fancy it is because they have never seen these people as they are—have never bridged over the great social gulf which divides us. Poor souls, so much of their wellbeing depends upon us—upon our approval,—upon our *patronage* often—that the shades of character are not seen, often because they are

never at their ease with us, and because, I fear, they wish to win our favour." There was silence for a while as the Rector mused; then he spoke again: "I have seen traits of character strongly marked in many of the poorest and most simple-minded of my parishioners. Some simple words (few people know how small the vocabulary of a country labourer is, especially one of the past generation) have shown an almost ideal nobility of character, which might put many of a higher grade to shame—a sense of the largest hospitality—a native wit and a delicacy of tact quite remarkable; while one finds germs of a poetic nature in an appreciation of natural beauty, expressed perhaps in a very crude form of words. I could tell you a story," continued the Rector, "connected with that cottage below there which would be a proof of the truth of what I say. Oh, there's nothing very romantic or tragic in it, as some would consider it," he added, as we expressed a wish to hear it; "the occurrences were very simple, and caused little remark at the time. It rests in my memory as marking the strong characteristics of those concerned in it. I'll tell it you as we go home."

The story, however, was not told at that time. I heard it only when I visited the Rectory again. My friend had the gift of story-telling, and his heart was in this, for it related to a part of the country he loved and to the people among whom his youth had been spent. In

youth he had been heir to a great part of the parish of which he was now only the Rector. The property was all lost to him before he inherited it, and his home broken up. When he returned to the parish it was as its incumbent, and he has often told me that no one was more surprised than he was when he found himself appointed to a place which at one time appeared to him in the light of a lost paradise.

This is the story, and I only wish I could repeat his version of it, word for word.

When I was young, said the Rector, there lived in the cottage by the mill a couple named Edser, whose only children, a pair of twins, pretty fair little things of five years old, were the delight of their parents, especially of their father, who perhaps might approach pretty nearly to the idea of "Hodge," as the character appears to some people, inasmuch as he had none of the advantages of modern education, and wore a "smock," which was in those days the usual and convenient attire of the labourers in Surrey, as it had probably been that of their fathers for more generations than they could count.

Edser was not the owner of the mill, nor the master of it; he lived in the cottage merely to look after it for the miller, who owned another in the neighbourhood.

Mrs Edser was what her neighbours called a "still woman"—*i.e.*, she was very

quiet, and unremarkable in every way — never talking much nor making friends out of her own house. The neighbours also said she had a temper, and lacked in thrift. A stranger, looking at her pale handsome face and reserved manner, might have thought she was of a higher grade than her husband, which, however, was not the case. She was in service at the time of her marriage, and could only read and write to the extent then considered sufficient by others of her class.

The twins were about five years old, when one spring day, attracted by the tufts of yellow marsh marigolds growing on the bank, they made their way to the farther side of the mill-pond, where the edge of the water was hidden in the lush herbage of spring. With their hands full of flowers, and chirping like two young birds, the children rambled on, heedless of danger, till they found themselves sinking in the ooze of the margin of the pond: then a frightened struggle hand-in-hand to escape from the chilly water, a plunge forward to catch at an overhanging branch, and both were in a moment overwhelmed in deep water. There was but a terrified cry, a splash, unheard by the mother, who was at the back of the house, or by the father, busy in the mill, where the panting of the great wheel drowned all other sounds.

It happened that a boy of some ten or twelve years, who had been sent on an errand to

the mill, was leaning over the half-door of the mill at the time that the children had strayed into danger. He heard the sudden splash and the cry, and in another moment he had dashed through the door, and running round the edge of the pond, had plunged into the water after the struggling children. One little skirt was caught, and the child dragged out and thrown out of danger on the bank; then in again,—ah! the water is deeper and colder now, and closing fast over the head of the brave boy, still striving to grasp the other sinking child: both must have sunk, but that help had come. A man passing up the lane had given the alarm; the father himself, the mother, wild with terror, crowded to the spot. The boy and the child were brought out together,—the boy half-unconscious and bewildered, but, after a few deep gasps, opening his eyes, and trying to get upon his feet; while loving hands snatched up the child, whose dripping hair clung close to a lifeless body, and whose blue eyes would never again open on this world.

It was a sad scene to mar the calm of that sequestered spot, under the bright spring sunshine, with the air full of humming insects and the song of birds, and the place gay with flowers. A few days afterwards I passed by the mill, and lapping against the bridge which crossed the stream were the scattered flowers which had fallen from the children's hands — frail

memorials of the little life so soon quenched. I remember I gathered them together and took them out of the water lest the parents should see them.

The passionate and unsubdued grief of the father was sooner over than the deep unspoken sorrow of the silent undemonstrative mother, whose heart was perhaps more deeply stirred, because the child she had lost was the weaker and less attractive of the two, and the one who most needed her care and protection. She was quiet and still in her grief, appearing to find relief in gratitude to the boy who had risked his life for her children, and who had saved her from being a childless mother. As far as it was possible in her circumstances and to her quiet nature, she took the boy, Jeffrey Lee, to her heart. He was a workhouse boy—a nobody's child, the people in the parish said—and his name was given him as that of the man who stood sponsor to him, "for want of a better," as they said. Jeff's parents had been "travellers," and that was all that was known about them.

He grew up to be a rosy, healthy little lad, however, doing credit to his workhouse fare and bringing up, such as it was in those days; and when old Adam Brown of the Hill Farm came one day to the "House" to ask if they had an honest lad who would work and give no trouble, he was told of Jeffrey Lee; and he was a happy boy that day when, with his scanty work-

house outfit tied up in a bundle in his hand, he trotted after his new master, to take possession of the little truckle-bed in the attic of the old farm on the hill. A picturesque old place it was then, having seen better days once. The only bit left of the old manor house it once was, consisted of the large open porch, and above it a mullioned window set in a fine ogee gable. There was a group of old Scotch firs on a mound close by, from which you could see miles over a thickly wooded country; and a great stretch of purple moor to the south, rising up till it fell abruptly down into the weald of Sussex, where beyond the blue boundary of distant downs one caught a misty glimpse of sea.

The farmhouse, with a few acres round it, had been in the possession of the Browns for several generations, though their position had never been above that of small farmers; and they were proud of their possession, and had never parted with it, though often pressed by poverty.

Adam Brown, the present owner, had made a little money elsewhere before he came to live there—a reserved eccentric man, seeming to belong to nobody. His only son, a wild intractable lad, always in disgrace, and bringing his father into trouble, had at last disappeared, leaving the old man alone. It was said that Harry Brown had once returned demanding money from his father, which being refused, he had possessed himself of it by force, and from that day he

had been heard of no more till reports came that he had died in South America. Meanwhile Jeff grew and prospered — an honest, simple-minded lad, who looked you in the face, and with a heart always open to kindness wherever he found it. He and “master,” as he always called Adam, got on well together; and gradually, as years went on, the lonely man and the boy who belonged to no one grew more and more to each other. Jeff never presumed on the confidence with which Adam treated him. His was a happy guileless nature, and he grew to look upon himself as wholly belonging to “master,” and part and parcel of the farm.

Adam was a good judge of horses, and always had a few promising young ones about the place. Jeff won his heart from the first by his absence of all fear in mounting bare-backed the wildest and least broken of the colts. And on market-days the boy might be seen careering up and down the market-place, without a saddle, showing off the paces of one destined to turn into a clever hack, or gig-horse, or to go well with the hounds with a hunting farmer; and who so happy as Jeff when, seated on one of his favourites, with rough coats, muddy heels, and long wind-blown manes and tails, he led the string to water? His brave act in saving Edser's child was soon forgotten in that primitive plac. Jeff himself from the first had shunned all reference to it, and it was only by the persistence of the mother of the child that he was at last

induced to go to the mill. After that, however, on Sundays and afternoons when his work was over, Jeff got into the habit of going to the cottage to play with little Milly, while Mrs Edser stitched up many a hole in Jeff's jacket which had been overlooked by old Jenny Sherman, Adam's housekeeper. The poor mother loved nothing so well as being kind to the boy. She was a woman of strong character, with all her silence and reserve; not a happy woman, as I came to know in after-days — one whose sense of right and wrong was strong and exacting; stronger, too, than her powers of self-control, and suffering keenly from the contact with rougher and less scrupulous natures. She and her husband could have had little in common, of which he was quite unconscious; as when she was striving with all her strength to hide her dislike and disapproval of some outbreak of language he sometimes, though by no means habitually, indulged in, or when he came home from the town, four miles away, having taken a too cheerful glass on his way. She had soon found that any remonstrance on her part (generally on religious grounds, very crude, poor woman, I daresay, and put in language hardly her own, and quite unintelligible to him) only made him angry, so she suffered in silence. She was a very religious woman, coming of a dissenting family. No doubt, in those days of carelessness and decay of Church principles, notwithstanding their narrow prejudices and one-sided view

of the truth, in many a country parish the earnestness and zeal of religion existed almost entirely among the "chapel people."

There was no "chapel," however, in our parish, and Mrs Edser was not only always to be seen in church, but she took Jeff with her, in which she was seconded by Adam Brown. He had curious notions of church-going himself, and never went there. My mother, who was beloved by all her poor neighbours, once tried to gain his confidence on the subject, but quite in vain. "Never you trouble yourself about me, my good madam," he said. "I'm quite as good a Christian as half the folks you see in church as regular as the parson himself." Adam's refusal to enter the church was supposed to be based upon an old quarrel relating to a "pew" for which the Hill farm had a faculty, and of which he had been deprived by some prior claimant. Adam declined to enter a place which only served to rouse his anger. In those days almost all village churches had high pews, and our little old church was no exception. It was filled with high wooden boxes, and plenty of whitewash did not add to its beauty. All these things are changed now, with many others. I remember them as inseparably connected with the locality I loved. Life sixty years ago was simpler in the people who dwelt in the hamlets edging the wide heaths and commons, in the cottages scattered by twos and threes along the green lanes, and in the farms lying solitarily among

the corn-fields and orchards. Then was to be heard on dewy summer mornings the long swish of the scythes in the hay-fields; and by midday the field was alive with colour and movement, as the long rows of women, with fluttering aprons and sun-bonnets, followed the mowers. There were no mowing or hay-making machines in those days. The ripe wheat fell rustling as the men bent to the sickle, and the sheaves were bound and piled by dexterous hands all the long August day of brilliant sunshine. There were saw-pits, too, in the wooded glades where the woodcutters were at work with jangling team and wain, and a "top sawyer" was more than a name. Now we have steam saw-mills and traction-engines breaking upon the woodland solitudes and silence with their discordant noises: in those days the winter stillness was broken only by the regular rhythm of the flails in far-off barns,—one might wander for days in the country now without the cheerful sound, with its associations, dear to some hearts: and surely the sheep-bells no longer fill the air as they used to do.

For education as we now consider it essential, there was none. How well do I remember the small pale woman who ruled as schoolmistress in the cottage on the edge of one of the great beech woods; and the village clerk, who was a blacksmith by trade, who officiated in church, a portly figure, in a brown wig and shorts and grey stockings, with a nose-gay in his buttonhole, of which a dahlia or a sunflower formed

a conspicuous part! Doubtless all these things are changed, but who shall say that the change is always for the better? I would by no means assert that the simple labouring folk—the men in the snowy “smocks” betokening Sunday, the women in tidy shawls and black silk bonnets—were less devout or less earnest in their worship than the generation that has followed them. If Jeff’s schooling had been such as he would have had now, no doubt he would have benefited by the many organisations intended for the good of his class. He would have been a member of a club, where his mind would have been opened by reading much cheap literature and the newspapers of the day; and being naturally a sober lad, he would have been induced to become a member of a temperance “guild.” He had none of the probable advantages of these things, however, and was so little advanced as not to know the want of them; and when all is said, I doubt if they would have made him a better or a happier man. Having to depend wholly on himself, he had learned to exercise every faculty he possessed in the everyday work of his life. When he was old enough to hold a plough, he drove a straight furrow, and was proud of it. In winter he cut and plashed the tangled hedges of thorn and bramble and wild-rose about the farm; and he turned a watercourse and dug a ditch with a pride in his work. Jeff’s vocabulary was small, but he used what words he had at command with a full

understanding of what he meant by them, and always to the point. Nevertheless, in these days I believe he would have earned nothing for himself but the name of “Hodge.”

Very soon after the events I have told you, my own home was broken up and passed into the hands of strangers. When I returned to the parish Jeff was a man of five- or six-and-twenty. The very Sunday following my return I understood what those years had done for him and for the little maid whose life he had saved. They were acknowledged lovers, having “kept company” for some years; and I met them both taking a Sunday walk in the lane leading down to the mill.

Mrs Edser appeared little altered since I had seen her last—fifteen years ago. No more children had been born to take the place of the one she had lost, and I soon found that she unconsciously invested the memory of that one with all the qualities she missed in the other belonging to her. Kitty would have been gentle and obedient, whereas Milly (though it was not from her mother that I heard it) was rebellious and wayward. Kitty would have sat at her knee and have listened to Bible stories, whereas Milly was impatient of anything but amusement. Most people would have forgiven Milly these things, for at twenty she was a beautiful girl; dark-haired like her mother, with grey eyes shaded by dark lashes—a mantling colour, none the less lovely because the sun had sown some brown freckles upon the other-

wise fair skin. There was a certain restraint between the mother and daughter. The neighbours said "Mrs Edser's girl" did not get on with her mother. Milly was, in fact, a disturbing element in the cottage. Her father idolised "his little lass," as he called her, and indulged her in everything. The mother, with better foresight, strove to tame her high spirits and wayward temper, and this led to jars. It ended in the mother being partly afraid of the beautiful wilful girl, who was always sure of her father's advocacy.

Milly's life had hitherto been the same as other girls of her class in the parish; when she grew tall enough she went to "a place." There was nothing to wonder at in the fact that no place suited her for long. She soon grew home-sick, and returned, and then another and another was tried; and now all this had come to an end, for she was going to be married. The affair seemed almost a matter of course; yet no one could see them together without knowing that the pair were in love with each other. Milly certainly was, and as for Jeff, his love for her had grown to be part of his very life. The neighbours said it was a good match, for had not Adam Brown said that he should leave Jeff all he had in the world? And as old Jenny Sherman was getting old for her work, he had declared himself willing that Milly should live at the farm and do for them all with Jenny's help.

They were to be married at Whitsuntide, and now it was April, and almost every evening

after his work Jeff was coming to see the girl who was so soon to be his wife. He had come one evening soon after my return, and looking in at the low casement, asked whether there was no errand he could do for "mother" (as he always called Mrs Edser) at G., whither he was going the next morning with a young horse the doctor there had taken a fancy to. Then the pair had stolen off together for a stroll, as they had done on many a spring evening of late. They had mounted the steep path through the coppice where primroses grew in profusion, and the girl had seated herself on the mossy bank by the pathway, her lap full of primroses, which she was tying in bunches, while Jeff was half-hidden among the hazel-bushes as he filled his hat with the flowers. It was there that I saw them: and I remembered it afterwards, as it was the last time I saw them together. I can see them now, as I came upon them suddenly on my way down through the copse — Milly rising as I came in sight with an awkward grace, Jeff shamefaced at being caught, only pushing farther out of sight among the bushes.

It was midday the next morning when Jeff brought out the young horse and mounted to start on his ride, with Adam standing by and looking on with pride. The last year or two had brought a certain change in the young man. There was a look of greater self-dependence than formerly, arising perhaps from his position at the farm, which had

prospered of late; for added to Adam's experience, there had been Jeff's keen eyes and aptitude for farm work. It was known that Adam was putting by money, and who was to come after him and inherit all he had but the young man who had been as a son to him all these years? No one who thought about the matter at all doubted the fact. It was a lovely spring morning when Jeff rode out of the farmyard quietly, for the grey must look his best when he brought him into G., down the narrow lane, whose high sandy banks were green with the lush herbage of spring, on to the highroad, and then up the white chalky track which led to the breezy down, where the cloud shadows were racing with the sunshine, and the wide landscape stretched at his feet was dappled with light and shade, and where he gave the grey a canter to put him in spirits; and gently now, into the county town, in the high street of which Jeff stopped to ask his way to the house he wanted. He had started again to follow the direction when he observed a lad of twelve with a pale face and a ragged jacket following him.

"Let me hold your horse, sir," said the boy, when Jeff stopped before the doctor's house.

"I don't want my horse held, my lad;" and he added quickly, as the boy took hold of the rein, "Out of the way, or he'll be over you."

It was too late: the horse, young and nervous, at the touch of a stranger threw up his head, and then, as the boy caught at

the rein, reared, plunged, and in a moment the boy was under his feet on the ground. Jeff sprang from his saddle in a moment, while a passer-by had as quickly dragged the boy out of further harm on to the pavement.

The boy, breathless and pale, as he sat on the curbstone, did not seem much hurt. "I wanted a copper," he said, "and I thought you'd give me one."

The doctor came out. "His arm is badly bruised," said he, after he had examined it. "Take him to the infirmary, and I'll be round as soon as you are there."

The boy turned to Jeff. "Please go and tell my mother," he said; "my name's Albert Brown, and we live in Church Alley, on the right. Tell her I'm not very bad," he added anxiously, and Jeff, in great compunction, though he knew he was not answerable for the boy's accident, put up his horse and started off.

"There's some one to see you, Mrs Brown," said the landlady of the small house in Church Alley, throwing open the door of a squalid room in which a woman in shabby gown, which had once been smart, was nursing a child; while a girl of fourteen, more pale and thin even than the boy who had been thrown down, and with a sweet gentle face, was trying to soothe to sleep a wailing child of two. A man about forty lay on an old horse-hair sofa covered with a ragged shawl, reading a dirty novel, looking very ill, and coughing.

"I knew there was some

trouble when I saw you come in," said the woman, wearily rising, when Jeff had told his tale, and had expressed sorrow for the accident, adding, "If there's anything to pay, I'm ready to do what I can, but it wasn't my fault, I'm bound to say."

"Well, we must be thankful it's no worse; but it's bad luck, like everything else. He's the only one who can get out to do anything. His father's too ill to go out, and we're strangers here."

"The stupid young rascal, it serves him right," interrupted the man on the sofa; "but who may you be?" he added, when Jeff had given the woman the few shillings he had in his pocket. "If the boy's laid up for long it will be a loss to us; and once you're gone, I don't reckon we shall see you again."

"I'm to be heard of any day at Adam Brown's at the Hill farm, about four miles from here; but I'll be in town in a day or two, and will go myself to see the boy."

At these words the man started up, and, throwing the book into a corner, exclaimed—

"Young man, do you know who Adam Brown is?"

"Only that he lives at the Hill farm, and that I've lived with him these fifteen years."

"Well—Adam Brown's my father."

Jeff started at the sudden announcement.

"Are you Harry Brown, then?"

"That's my name, at your service;" but here he was seized with so violent a fit of coughing that his wife started

up and hastened to him, making signs to Jeff to go, saying in a hurried whisper, "Stop outside, and I'll come to you when the fit is over."

Jeff, astounded, and hardly able to take in the purport of what he heard, waited outside the door till the violence of the choking fit was passed, and after a few minutes' silence the woman joined him, closing the door behind her.

"He's better now," she said; "yes, he's been very ill, and we'd a bad passage from America. But I want to ask you, Do you know Adam Brown? Well, you must if you live with him. Does he ever mention his son Harry? Will he be glad to hear of him? Will he see him, do you think?"

"That's more than I can say; he was told his son died some years ago."

"Oh no, he's not dead! That was because there was some story against him, and he had to keep out of the way. It was before he married me. Since then we have been living in America, and doing pretty well; but we've gone down-hill lately, and my husband's health has been very bad. At last we settled we'd come over here to see what his father would do for us. A mate of my husband's from these parts told us his father was alive and hearty; and there's the children. He was going over to the place to see if his father would take us in and let bygones be bygones; but there, he fell ill again, and now I don't know when he'll get out."

As Jeff rode over the downs,

where he looked down into the wooded valley in which his home lay, he saw nothing, though all was visible to his bodily eyes. That was Harry Brown, then, his master's son, whose name he had hardly heard mentioned, who had nearly broken his father's heart; and he had come home, as Jeff's common-sense told him, to bring trouble, and perhaps shame. Jeff was not given to meditation, and now his thoughts were flying wildly from one thing to another, trying to realise what he had heard in vain.

It was with these confused images rushing through his mind that he came in sight of the Hill farm, and saw a little crowd of people standing within the old porch. A heavy sense of coming evil fell at once on Jeff's already agitated heart, and as he sprang down from his horse, looking from one to another of the neighbours who had gathered there, there was no need to ask what had happened, for ill news is quickly told. His master was dead. He had been found by his old housekeeper sitting in his easy-chair, his head resting on his arms, as if he was asleep. He must have died, they said, within an hour of Jeff's leaving him.

Adam was gone: he had passed away "by the visitation of God"—faithful words! Do we not somewhat abrogate them when in our supplication from visible and invisible evils we pray to be guarded from "sudden death"?

It was as one in a dream that Jeff went about the old

place, trying to do faithfully the work that had been his to do when the "master's" eye was upon him. The neighbours came and went; the nine days' wonder of the startling event in a place so seldom stirred by unlooked-for occurrences died out.

To me only Jeff told the strange event of that morning, and I had advised him to abide by the advice of an older head than his own, and not to take as truth, without strict investigation, what might be the false claim of an adventurer. The occurrence somehow got about, however; but it seemed to be taken as a matter of course notwithstanding (and as, indeed, the lawyer who made the will averred) that Jeff was sole heir to whatever property Adam had left.

Then the day came when a little procession left the old farm; and the still form, whose presence had hitherto made Jeff and poor Jenny feel that the master was still in his own house, was carried over the threshold his foot would never pass again.

An hour later, three or four of those who had followed the funeral returned and entered the homely parlour in which Adam was wont to transact business. They included myself, and the lawyer who made the will, and two others of Adam's neighbours, who were come to hear the will read. Jeff, looking deadly pale, had been told to enter with us, otherwise I don't think he would have come.

It was soon over. After the usual forms and signatures there

were but a few words. "I leave the Hill farm, and all the goods and money I possess, to Jeffrey Lee, who is my adopted son." There was a pause when the reading was over, and then all looked at Jeff. For a moment he seemed unable to speak, and the lawyer began to wish him joy; but Jeff found his voice and interrupted him.

"You're very good, sir," he said, "but I can't take master's money, no, nor the old place. You've maybe heard that his son has come back; anyway, a man calling himself so has, and I've seen him and his children. I can't say he's not what he calls himself—there's a look about him makes me think he is; but I'm willing to wait and have it proved. If he's not what he says he is, why, then—then," and here for the first time his voice failed him, but in a few moments he went on, "He's been a father to me, master has, sir, and I'm grateful, I'm very grateful; but if this man is his own son, and those children are his grandchildren, I couldn't feel it right—I could not be easy taking it, because master mightn't have done what he did by me if he knew his own son was alive and come back."

"Did your master ever tell you he left his property to you only in the belief that his son was dead?"

Jeff answered at once. "I've tried to remember if he did say that, but no, he never did. Once he said to me, when he'd as good as told me he'd left all to me, 'Remember, I've forgiven him—I've forgiven my only son'; those were his words,

and if he'd known that he was alive and come back, and if he'd seen the children, how do I know that he wouldn't have given it all to them?"

Well, we all talked to him in vain. God forgive us for striving to tempt him away from the simple honesty of his purpose. He had thought it all out during the lonely days which followed upon Adam's death. His simple upright nature allowed him no subterfuge—there was no peace for him, no "ease" as he had said, while conscience, the guide we all strive so often to lull into silence, spoke in disapproval; and besides all this, there was in Jeff's heart the loyalty of love. The thought of taking advantage of his old master and friend's kindness to do what he would have undone had he lived was abhorrent to him,—not that he expressed himself in these words, and indeed he seemed to have none at his command to explain his reasons; his friends could but judge by his actions.

It was all too easily proved, though it took some time to carry through owing to the serious illness of the man himself. A few letters from his father in which the writing was unmistakable, the easy recognition of those who had known him in earlier days, proved him to be the same Harry Brown who had fled from his father's just anger. There was nothing to prevent the fact from being established, that this man who had returned in great poverty with a wife and children was indeed no other than Adam Brown's only and unworthy son.

"And quite ready to cut up rough, if he could," said the lawyer. "He came to me, and began to bluster about undue influence and what not, but I silenced him, and told him we all knew the circumstances under which he made himself scarce twenty years ago, and that the fact of his keeping out of his father's sight all these years, and giving out that he was dead, was quite enough to render any nonsense of that sort useless. There's nothing to be done but for our man to refuse to prove the will, and for this fellow to take possession as heir-at-law.

But before this Jeff had to go through a harder trial. He had not gone down to the mill before the funeral, nor had he seen Milly, who had wept a little when she heard of the death, which had gone like a shock through the parish. She was not fond of sad things, and had not gone with her father and mother to pay what they considered a duty to the dead, in coming with their neighbours to gaze on the remains, lying so rigid and still in the swept and garnished little chamber upstairs at the farm. Jeff had not cared to ask what they had heard or knew. He was perfectly simple in all his actions, and did not look upon himself as a hero or a martyr; and the very evening after the funeral he had gone down at the usual hour to the cottage, and as usual he and Milly went out together for a stroll.

Edser himself was not to be seen: he had heard rumours of Jeff leaving the farm, and not being clever at argument or

caring to show how puzzled he was to account for such a strange proceeding, he kept out of the way.

Alas! when the lovers found themselves alone, it was no longer the "primrose path" they were treading. Milly, too, had heard rumours, and had made up her mind; but no one knew what took place between them. In half an hour they returned together — Milly in tears, but her eyes bright with anger as well, and seeing her father entering from the mill, she went swiftly up to him.

"Father, make Jeff bide by his word: he says he must give up the money, and he promised I should live at the farm. If he does give it up I won't marry him: make him keep his word to me."

Alas! poor Jeff. Milly, without looking at him or saying another word, turned to the inner door, and they heard her mount the narrow stair to the room above, shutting the door and drawing the bolt.

"You're behaving like a fool," said her father roughly to Jeff, "to yourself, let alone what you do to my girl"; and he went out with a muttered oath.

"Mother," said Jeff to her as she sat, with her pale face and troubled eyes, looking up at him, "haven't you a good word to say to me?"

"They can't see it, Jeff; they can't see it as you do."

"Will she come round, mother? Do you think she'll keep as cruel as that?"

Jeff, strong man as he was, leaned with both arms and bent head on the table; the blow seemed to stagger him.

The mother shook her head; she knew too well her daughter would never "come round," and that she was incapable of any generosity of feeling in this, as in all else, since her childhood. Milly was but acting up to her own character. She did not, however, remain in this mood for long. She was prudent, and would not give up such a lover as Jeff without good cause. I believe too she loved him, after the fashion of her shallow heart. She strove with all her power to make him change his purpose; and when she saw it was in vain, I have no doubt she shed many tears of self-pity as she lay on the homely couch upstairs, with the low lattice window looking on the hill and the wood and the still pool where fifteen years before a brave boy had perilled his own life for hers; but her purpose never wavered. She knew herself, this world-wise village maiden, and had weighed well the consequence of what she was doing. Meantime there was no delay when once the arrangements were begun. The Browns were eager and unscrupulous, homeless and almost penniless. It was almost a surprise to Jeff to find himself so soon thrown upon the world, and without a home. His neighbours took the occurrence with wonderful indifference: they did not understand his scruples, and it would have puzzled many to enter into any discussion of it. They were not in the habit of expressing themselves on any subject, unless it was a matter in hand

concerning themselves. Harry Brown's reappearance touched them nearer—they could understand that. "To think of he turning up again," they said; "why, they said he was dead, —a mortal bad chap he was, surely."

"He's a poor creature at best," said the lawyer to the parson in talking over the affair; "nothing but shame made him agree to hand over £50 to the poor fellow who has given him all he had in the world. It will be something for Jeff to fall back upon, but it was all I could squeeze out. His wife, though she is but a tawdry thing to look at, and the children, seem a better sort than you'd expect, and there's a great look of old Adam in the boy."

I used to think something of the spirit of martyrdom was given to Jeff at this time. He gave way to no outspoken regrets, but gravely went about doing such duties as were left to him: the nearest sign of tenderness was given to the dumb animals he was about to leave, and which were all to be sold for the benefit of the heir, who was eager to turn everything into money.

I have finished my story, and looking back upon it, I almost wonder what is the worth of relating one so simple in all its details; yet surely, in the complexities of this world and age, an honest purpose, carried out with the simplicity of a single eye, is rare as it is true and good. Many of Jeff's friends thought him a fool; some spoke of re-

sponsibilities which he was wrong to thrust aside, others looked upon Milly as a much-injured person. I confess that to this day "tears rise in the heart, and gather to the eyes," when I recall Jeff in those days, and realise the greatness of his renunciation—a renunciation, be it remembered, which was as great in him as if the few hundreds which were his had been counted by many thousands, and as if the old farm had been a palace. I think it is Victor Cousin who says in one of his biographies that such tears, called forth by some instance of true nobility of character, are an evidence of the immortal, and that they are an unconscious protest against the ordinary baseness of our lives.

In a few weeks Jeff had left the country, and the place knew him no more. His friends had found a situation for him under the overseer of a large farm in the north, where his knowledge of horses was a recommendation. I heard of him in after-years as married. His wife was Adam Brown's granddaughter, the pale girl whom he had seen first on the day of her brother's accident. Hardly had the family settled in the Hill farm when Harry Brown died. Even as soon as that most of the money he had inherited was squandered, and the property passed to his wife and children. The farm was sold, and they went to live in the north, where the mother had relations, and, by a strange

coincidence, near to the place of Jeff's employment. She makes him a good wife, I am told, and I fancy Jeff's home is a happy one, though he is a hard-working labouring man still.

Long before this, however, Milly had left the cottage by the mill. They told me she was gone to stay with an aunt, and she soon married from there—a good marriage, her mother said, for her who was a cottage girl. Her husband was a tradesman, doing a good business I have no doubt.

Mrs Edser, more than ever a "still woman," is left to dwell on the memory of the child she had lost in its happy innocence, and on "the son" she had taken to her heart in its first sense of desolation. I think she is a happier woman than she used to be. She and I have long talks sometimes: with a higher education and in a wider sphere she might have developed into a Jean Maria Guyon, or such as we are told was the character of the recluses of Port-Royal. It is happy for her, perhaps, that she had neither the education nor the sphere.

She is an old woman now, but every Sunday I see her go round the eastern end of the church, where deep in the daisied turf is a little grave, on which she lays a nosegay of humble cottage flowers. There she stands for a while with a quiet, almost happy, look on her face, content to wait till "that which is perfect" is come.

THE STATE OF IRELAND.

It is often said that a new Cromwell is needed to govern Ireland; but whether those who so speak would be entirely pleased if their wish was fulfilled is perhaps doubtful. It is true that Cromwell established peace and comparative prosperity in an island which had been full of massacre and civil war, but the Cromwell legend has little foundation in historic facts. He put to the sword the garrisons of Drogheda and Wexford, which refused to surrender to his summons, and struck fear into all; but his enemies were of the Cavalier class, and he slew quite as many Presbyterians as Romanists on these occasions. His treatment of the peasantry was such that the priests found their forces melt away, and were obliged to spread the report that his "apparent leniency" was to be followed by extermination; in spite of which his armies were well supplied by the markets which he opened, when the people found that ready money was paid. He forbade the Mass, but he announced that in no other manner would conscience be disturbed, in any town that he entered; and the towns summoned as a rule surrendered in consequence. When he became Protector he said that in no country known to him were the poor so much oppressed by landlords and great men; and he sent therefore an English Chief Justice to see that such wrong and

oppression should be prevented. Peace and tolerance were established by Cromwell in Ireland, and the lawlessness of all factions alike controlled. No doubt, therefore, the policy of the man who found English rule hardly extant in the island—only Dublin and Londonderry holding out when he arrived—is one which would not have been condemned by statesmen of any age. The "curse of Cromwell," the mythical "hell or Connaught," and the "extermination" which the priests falsely predicted, are represented only in history by the planting of certain Protestant colonies which thrived for a time under his care, and by the deportation to the Barbadoes of a certain number of prisoners who surrendered at discretion. No Englishman perhaps better understood the Irish character, but, while he ruled as a master, he evinced in Ireland, as elsewhere, that consideration for the poor and weak, and that tolerance, which caused him to be trusted and followed in England and in Scotland as well.

Mr Parnell is stated to have told Father Healy that Ireland would never be governed without coercion, whether it had Home Rule or not; but what did he mean by coercion? All government coerces in the interest of the public, but the word is applied to arbitrary or personal government, not in accord with ordinary law. Coercion exists in Ireland at the

present time — not that of Government, nor that even of true public opinion, but that of a League which has been denounced from the Bench as a conspiracy. The troubles of Ireland are due to the old causes which had reduced it to anarchy in Cromwell's time, namely, treachery, deceit, and violence, the absence of trust between man and man, and of that sober spirit of independence which makes the Scotsman or the Englishman a law-abiding subject. There is nothing bad, or illegal, in agitation for an object desired by a large class for the furtherance of their own welfare; but the terrorism of a mob, led by unscrupulous intriguers, is recognised, in all free countries, as a tyranny which is not for the public good. The danger in Ireland always arises, not through the action of the people as a whole, but through their cowardice in submitting to the dictation of a few violent men; and the organisation of such can never be intended for the general good, but only for the furtherance of selfish aims.

There must, however, always be a popular feeling to which such agitators appeal, and some blind desire, on which they trade, that lies close to the heart of the people. The New League appeals to the only real craving of the peasantry, who are indifferent as to the constitution of the Central Government, but earnest in their desire to become the owners of the lands that they till, and to till better lands than those they at present

hold. Amid all the bitter feelings, and violent talk, which may be observed by the onlooker to be peculiar to no one class or interest, the realities of the situation are forgotten, and the remedies proposed are utterly without value. Ignorance and prejudice blind the eyes of the gentry and peasantry alike, and the public welfare is not understood or considered. The priests are suspected of fomenting the strife for their own ends, and "Home Rule is Rome rule" in the opinion of the Protestant, though as a fact the Church of Rome is usually, and naturally, found on the side of Conservatism, as against Revolution. Whatever be the schemes of individual leaders among the Romanist clergy, it must be remembered that the parish priests are themselves of the agricultural class. They sympathise naturally with the prejudices of that class, and they are in addition so dependent on their flock for a living that, unless individually of strong character, they are forced to consider the village public opinion. They also, in some cases at least, are, like the rest of the people, subject to coercion. Nor is the land-hunger peculiar to Catholics, for we have been very clearly shown, by the proceedings of Mr Russel, that it also exists among the Protestants of Ulster. It is useless to denounce the Irish generally as dishonestly intent on breaking the contract whereby they consent to pay to the owner rent, demanded for the right of liv-

ing and working on his land ; because such theory of contract is not present in their minds, or likely to have been instilled into them by history. They think of rent rather as the ancient feudal tribute to a chief, given in return for his services as leader and lawgiver of the clan. They have in addition imbibed ideas due to the observation of landed conditions in America, known to themselves much better than to their landlords ; and they ask, "For what reason should we pay rent at all? What does the owner do for us or for the land in return? What right has he to call the land his? and what reason to forbid us from cultivating that which he at best uses for a purpose that feeds fewer mouths and produces less for the nation at large?" It is vain to say that such language is revolutionary, and that an attack on private property is mere robbery. These ideas exist, and are not to be rooted out of the minds of the people, and must be remembered in any attempt to deal with the problem.

In the interests of the land-owning class it should also be clearly recognised that Irish landlords have only themselves to thank, in many cases, for the position in which they are placed. They are bitter against the lower class. Some of the more violent and foolish may be heard to not only recommend that a Cromwell (such as they imagine Cromwell to have been) should be made ruler of Ireland, but

even to suggest that what is really wanted is a Judge Jeffreys, and a "Bloody Assize." The parallel is unfortunate in one respect, that the victims of his fury were not Catholics but Protestants. Such men accuse the peasantry of being dishonest, treacherous, and lazy, and the Central Government of truckling to the mob. When men so speak in public, and to strangers, it is natural to ask whether their own word can always be implicitly trusted,—whether they themselves have always adhered to their covenants, never arbitrarily raised their rents in past times, and never shown favour unjustly ; whether they know what it is to feed a family on five pounds a-year ; whether they are usefully employed in work of public benefit, or too proud to beg. It is through the ignorance and idleness of such men that their order is brought into danger. Cromwell, who was himself of gentle birth, said that England desired to preserve the ancient ranks in society, but that the true way lay in making lords and gentlemen upright in the discharge of their duty. There is no sadder sight than to witness the decay of an Irish gentleman, educated at Eton and Oxford, but retiring to his home in the wild outlying provinces, there to spend his days in gambling, drinking, and fighting his tenants : clinging to the last shreds of ancient privilege, and despondently predicting general ruin. Every effort to develop and better the country that is

made by wiser men is ridiculed by such, and they seem even pleased when they have succeeded in frustrating the work, set in hand by those who aim at the benefit not of one class but of the nation as a whole. Leagues for the Defence of Property are well enough, as lawful combinations, but a public opinion among gentlemen, to control their own class, is yet more important, but unfortunately not yet created.

It is not so much by race as by religion that landlords and tenants are divided in Ireland. The difference of race has been greatly over-estimated. A learned German ethnologist colours nearly the whole of Ireland as Celtic, with only a narrow Teutonic or Scandinavian fringe on the east coast. History, language, and racial type alike prove him to be wrong. The old Firbolgs or "Belgic men,"¹ and the Fenians or "fair men," were Kelts or Goidals; but the Danish kings of Limerick ruled before Strongbow, and a Danish type can be recognised even in the far western islands, to say nothing of Scots in the north, Spanish blood derived from Spanish colonies of the time of Elizabeth in the south, Dutch, Walloon, and Saxon elements even in Connaught. The ancient Irish language is full of words not only Latin (and showing

the Gallic derivation of the Church of St Patrick), but also French and Teutonic, clearly indicating how early the main elements of civilisation were brought to Ireland from England and from the continent of Europe. It is only perhaps in the wild mountains west of Loch Mask that a purely Celtic population—and one speaking Irish only—is to be found, and even among these traces of early Teutonic admixture may be noted. The upper class in Ireland springs almost exclusively from conquering nobles—the Normans under Strongbow, the Englishmen to whom Elizabeth gave confiscated lands, and the Dutchmen who were in like manner rewarded by William of Orange. Yet the descendants of such families are as distinctively Irish as are their tenants. In type, in speech, in courtesy of manner, and in theory of life, they are as distinct from the English upper class, and as similar to the Irish peasantry, as it is possible to be; and one of the great difficulties in dealing with the country lies in the fact that they share the national defects of character as well as the national virtues.

But as regards religion, there is a real division, such as does not exist in England or Scotland. The majority of the gentry are Protestant members of the Church of Ireland,

¹ *Bolg* in Irish means "pale-faced," and would apply to the pure Irish type, with pale complexion, blue eyes, and black hair, and also to the Welsh type, with dark eyes. But this may be the meaning of the name of the Continental Belge known to Cæsar. *Flann*, on the other hand (whence Flyn and Flannigan), means "ruddy," and would apply to the red Celtic type and the red-haired people, found also in Connemara.

and strongly opposed to any Ritualistic advance that might even seem to be an approach to Romanism. Three quarters of the peasantry are Catholic; and even among the minority the Protestantism is not that of the upper class, but mainly Presbyterian in the North, and Wesleyan or otherwise Nonconformist in other parts of Ireland. The squire does not appear on Sunday among his peasant neighbours. He worships alone; and they, for the most part, in what is still called the "chapel," even when the Roman Catholic place of worship may be a larger church than the Protestant one. The recent census shows us indeed that the diminution of the population has proportionally been much larger among the Catholics than among the Protestants: but it must be a very long time before the present proportion of three to one is materially changed; and the influence of religious belief in Ireland tends to embitter, rather than to assuage, the fatal separation of the classes.

It must not be forgotten that the modern theory of private property in land has only been recognised in Ireland since quite recent times. Private ownership is not a primeval condition of society. In the Bible it appears as a later innovation. In India, in Russia, in the Turkish Empire in Asia, and even in Spain, the early communistic ownership of agricultural land

survives. The early theory looked on such land as common property of the village or clan. It was (and still is) annually divided up according to the power of the individual family to cultivate, and each year the ploughman may have a different field to till. It was—and is—in such communities regarded as of the first importance that the land should be put to the best use for the general benefit. The old system of "rundale" in Ireland, which still survives in some outlying regions, and which leads to hopeless confusion and waste, was really the outcome of this communistic theory of property. The land (just as among the Arabs, or the Kaffirs of South Africa) did not belong to the chief, but to the tribe. He was indeed the tribal trustee, and shared the lands among his followers, but he was bound by public opinion so to share it that the most should be got from the soil for his people. Such was the condition of landed property before the feudal system came in with Strongbow, and such it continued to be much later, among the clansmen of O'Briens, and O'Sullivans, O'Connors, and other truly Irish families, until confiscation followed conquest in the Elizabethan and later ages.¹ The right to private property was a right of conquest. It was a free gift by the king to his feudal vassal, who in return not only owed war service to

¹ The substitution of the feudal for the tribal system in the O'Brien earldom dated from the time of Henry VIII. The Sullivans were finally conquered during the Protectorate.

the State, but also served as the local ruler of his estate. Such conditions have ceased to exist, especially in Ireland, not only because the landowner—as in France—deserted his post for attendance at Court, and ceased to render any services at all, but because now, by law, he is no longer really an owner at all, but the possessor of a claim, as a charge on the land in which he has no other interest.

Not that this is the view among all Irish landlords; for there are many who regard their duties in quite a different light, and who do still endeavour to be the natural leaders and friends of their poor neighbours, reaping as a reward confidence and affection. For it is noticeable that less is said against the people by those who are so working, than by those who have no real claim to their respect, and who will still avail themselves of ancient and obsolete customs which are directly traceable to old feudal rights, while at the same time endeavouring to enforce the modern theory of contract when it affects their rents. But to the lower class, who have no education in such theory, the older idea of tribal organisation is still a reality. The lands in their view belong to those who till them, and the tribute to a chief descended from conquerors is not an obligation of honour, but only of necessity. The compact is broken, for the chief no longer rules. The peasant, who would be scrupulously honest as to other private property, and who would not steal money or cattle, will yet see no

wrong in withholding rent, and deny the landlord's right to dispose of any land according to his own wish, and against the general desire of the tenants. These ideas should be held in view in condemning the actions of a people whose whole soul is set on the possession and cultivation of land in Ireland.

But it is impossible for a Government to divide the sheep from the goats, and to proceed on the principle that good landlords and good tenants shall be rewarded, and bad ones be eradicated. Such ideas may lead Mr Kruger, but are known to be impracticable by more experienced statesmen. All that a Government can do is to allow real conditions to develop naturally, recognising what the conditions really are, though obscured by the violent outcry of ignorance or self-interest; and in the meantime to keep the peace, and secure freedom for each individual, protecting him from the violence or fraud of his neighbour. If it has become impossible for existing owners to live on the fraction of the original income from the land which alone remains theirs, they should be aided and encouraged to turn their attention to some useful profession from which to earn a living. The transfer of land should be made as easy and as cheap as possible, and care should be taken that lawyers should not be able to impose on either tenant or landlord an exorbitant charge for legal decisions. They so far are, as a class, the greatest gainers by existing landed conditions. It is the well-known

duty of Government to protect the owners from lawlessness and coercive conspiracy, but it is also a duty to see that the owner keeps within his rights, and does not indulge in arbitrary actions, due either to a determination of showing a power which he imagines himself to possess, or to mere enmity towards his tenants as a class. In every case of dispute it must not be assumed that either party is in the right until the particular circumstances of the case are known. Even a Conservative Chief-Secretary has been known to complain that he was thwarted and not helped by the landlords of Ireland. If an owner desires to sell, and is offered fair terms by tenants, or by a tenant association that desires to buy, it is not in the public interest that he should introduce a stranger, who offers no better terms, merely because he is ill-disposed to his neighbours. It may be necessary to protect him from the violence of the local League, but he can hardly claim that there is no fault at all on his own part. Those who have lived for many generations on the spot have, after all, a claim which should be recognised by one whose family has been long connected with them, and other conditions being equal such a claim should not be utterly disregarded. No Government of true statesmen would seek to impose compulsory sale, but it may, in the interests of other owners, fairly claim to control the foolish and angry proceedings of such as are enemies of their own order.

These questions are perhaps likely to become of pressing importance in Ireland. There are symptoms of the recrudescence of agrarian agitation and outrage. The Government is called on by some to take strong action, by suppressing the so-called United Irish League, or by proclaiming counties such as Sligo and Leitrim under the existing Coercion Act, which has for the last six years been entirely in abeyance. It would be a melancholy confession of failure, if the same Cabinet that introduced the County Council system into Ireland were also obliged once more to resort to measures of emergency; and we may hope that the ordinary law will be found sufficient to deal with present circumstances. During the six years Ireland has increased in material prosperity, and the foundation of a system that must lead to yet greater progress has been laid. The action of the new Agricultural, and of the older Congested Districts Boards, has been vigorous and successful; and the returns of the Savings Banks in Ireland have this year reached a figure never known before. If we could see the Ireland of a century ago—even though then enjoying a purely artificial prosperity, due to the destruction of Continental agriculture by Napoleon—we should no doubt be astonished to witness the enormous progress of the island in material welfare. Yet we hear of discontent and lawlessness still not healed, of landlords and others boycotted in north, south, and west alike, of ricks and moors burnt, cattle maimed, and

the houses of farmers wrecked by dynamite. The overt object of the new league is to further the interests of the poor by lawful agitation, but the methods of the local branches—if not of the central organisation—are the same which led to what are now called the “bad times” of 1880. Are we once more going back to the crimes and terrors of twenty years ago?

The country is suffering not for the reason that it is governed in an arbitrary manner, for it now enjoys equal liberty of self rule with England and Scotland, but on account of its own internal dissensions and jealousies. Were Home Rule granted, and England ceased to trouble itself—for a time—as to the fate of Ireland, these dissensions would at once break forth into yet more violent warfare of sect and sect, class and class, race and race. But a people who have shown such determination regarding South Africa are not likely to fail in their duty as regards Ireland. They will continue to bear the heavy burden which the unreason and the poverty of the sister island places on their shoulders. The task is not one to be envied, for on all sides the Central Government is bombarded with cries and demands. The constabulary ask for increased pay; the Nationalist members make the most of such opportunity as is afforded by our foreign and colonial difficulties; the landlords cry aloud for coercion, and the peasantry for compulsory purchase of land. Only those at the rudder of State are competent to say what

should be done; but this at least can be said, that certain things never should be done in Ireland. The Government must not be bullied, nor wheedled, nor hurried, nor faint-hearted; but through good and evil report, unhesitating and unrelenting, must continue to keep the peace among factions, and to deal out even justice to all.

Agricultural troubles are not confined to the extreme west. Even in Donegal there are estates where no rent at all can be obtained; though the traveller who crosses those dark mountains, and sees only here and there patches of well-tilled black soil, is inclined to ask what rent can be expected. The patient industry shown by the tillage of every scrap of arable soil on those steep hill-sides shows that, in the north at least, the peasantry are not idle or thriftless. In the south they are, perhaps, less energetic, but in the great county of Mayo they support themselves by annual migration to England in the harvest-time. The fine physique of this peasantry, their devotion to home and to agriculture, are national assets not to be undervalued. They are an unreliable and untruthful race, as are many other populations that have been oppressed for many generations in the past; but they are among the most intelligent and conservative of any peasantry in Great Britain, and the decrease of their numbers, except in certain overcrowded and utterly uninhabitable districts, is much to be deplored. The arrangements

whereby it is sought to spread this population, and to bring it on to better lands, may in a few years serve to check this depopulation of the country; and they are the true remedies for present troubles, as far as they go. A people who trust neither their parliamentary representatives, nor even always their priests, have developed some real respect for the Board which labours for the material improvement of Irish agriculture, and stock-raising, and fisheries. It is here that the real work in Ireland is being done.

Hopes are also no doubt entertained by some that the standard of education among the Roman Catholic upper classes may be raised by the work of the new Commission, when expressed by law. But the difficulties to be encountered in this direction are great, and are due to the Catholics themselves. The priests strongly object to the education of their flock in any university like that to which Trinity College belongs, because they desire to keep the young away from Protestant youth. But exclusively Catholic universities abroad—in America and in Switzerland, for instance—have more than once been wrecked by priestly interference. It is impossible for a professor to teach modern science or history, for example, if he is to be constantly shackled by the fears and scruples of the clergy, and by ecclesiastical policy. It is admitted, even by priests, that the Protestants are better educated and more prosperous than are the Catholics; but they fail to see that this is due, not to any favour shown by

Government, but to their own fears of modern teaching and knowledge. Even the work of the Christian Brothers, who provide a good primary education, is regarded with dislike by the secular clergy. If exclusively Romanist colleges are really established, it is still very doubtful whether they will not fall into disrepute almost as soon as they are started, because of the trammels which will be imposed on the teachers. As regards the lower classes, the priests have shown great energy and shrewdness in starting national schools, because by becoming the founders they became able to control the choice of teachers. Thus primary education has rapidly advanced, in even the poorest and most remote districts of Ireland. Whether it will be found equally easy to control a flock that is able to read, as compared with the old utterly illiterate peasantry, may perhaps be doubted. But not only the schools but the newspapers most read by the peasantry are, at present, in the hands of the priesthood; and in such papers the reader finds pious stories, and descriptions of the glories of the papal court, legends of the saints, and accounts of famous relics, mingled with false news from Paris of Boer victories, and with denunciations of the Coronation oath, and reports of the meetings of the National League. You may unfortunately look in vain for any denunciation of outrage, or exhortation against cruelty, and may expect, rather, a diatribe against landgrabbers, and rude portraits of obscure Parlia-

mentary members, with enthusiastic descriptions of meetings which were perhaps in reality failures. This is the pabulum which the Church sees fit to provide for those whom she has been forced by law into teaching to read. But the man who can read, and who goes every year to England, Wales, or Scotland, cannot well be prevented, when there, from making acquaintance with very different literature: and it may be doubted whether the influence of priests is not somewhat on the wane in consequence even now.

This progress in independence, and in education, among the peasantry, even under conditions which still give so much power to the priests, is one of the more hopeful signs for the future. If we look back, even only half a century, to the condition of Ireland after the great famine, and read the accounts of the lawlessness that prevailed in the days of O'Connell, we cannot fail to feel encouraged as to the progress of the country. The theory which, under Peel, indicated a concurrent establishment of the Roman Church as the best means of contenting the people, became obsolete from the day that the Church of Ireland was disestablished, and is not likely to form a feature in future policy; nor was it ever greatly desired by a priesthood whose income from voluntary contributions was—and still is—larger than any endowments that the State was likely to offer.

It is, however, to be regretted that Protestant haste and zeal

should retard the gradual progress of self-emancipation, which is slowly resulting from increased education. There has been a recrudescence of religious bitterness in many parts of Ireland—notably in Belfast and Limerick—due to proselytising zeal. In all countries where peoples of differing religion live side by side (as do the Christians and Moslems of the Levant, for instance), the ordinary conditions which make intercommunication inevitable among neighbours lead to a softening of fanatical feeling, which is as a rule disturbed only by the action of strangers, appearing as political agitators or proselytising zealots, who stir up strife. No Government can, in our time, take sides in the religious quarrels of subjects. Its duty is to protect all, and to keep the peace. But recent occurrences show that, if such impartial rule were withdrawn, all the ancient fury which depopulated Ireland before the arrival of Cromwell might again be let loose, and an actual war of Catholic and Protestant might still be possible. It would be well, under present difficulties, if the leaders of the Protestant Church could show an example to their opponents, by discouraging the growth of religious strife, and the interference of missionaries with the flocks of the Church of Rome. But it must not be forgotten that the Catholic priests are often equally to blame, in their intolerance of Protestants when poor and scattered, and in the coercive measures by which they seek to make converts.

It is remarkable that the League seems to make progress in the villages and country districts, rather than in the towns, where attempts to form branches have of late failed. In this respect the division is the same that was observable earlier, when the towns were Parnellite, and the country anti-Parnellite. The priests had denounced Parnell, and their influence was felt far less in the towns than in the country. So now it seems that in the country, where the parish priest is sometimes the chairman of the local branch of the League, the success of this mischievous organisation is greater than in towns, where the shopkeepers have more to lose by agitation, and are less dependent on the clergy.

The Irish Nationalist members—with a few exceptions—do not belong to the best class of Irish society. Their manners, and their political ideas, which seem mainly to be imported from America, are not only repugnant to the traditions of the British Parliament but they represent a lower standard of political conduct than that which has been attained in Great Britain generally. It has been shown above that the Irish members have taken up a popular cry; yet it cannot be said that they are regarded with any enthusiasm by their own constituents. They are, for the most part, nominees of a Church which does not desire to aid a Protestant Government; and it is hardly too much to say that they are a curse to Ireland, as well as a

constant annoyance to any Government that aims at the public good. They are nevertheless a necessary evil for the present, and we can only hope that progress among their constituents may, in the end, lead to the extinction of a party distrusted almost as much in Ireland as in Great Britain.

Too much importance may, however, be given to the scarcely veiled threats of Irish members in Parliament, for these are often mere bluster, intended, if possible, to frighten the executive. The coming winter may prove how far there is real cause for anxiety as to the public peace in Ireland, but the fears of the upper class are perhaps to be regarded as exaggerated. There seems to be a tendency among the peasantry to render the preserving of game impossible—at least for unpopular landlords,—and a deep jealousy as to its preservation in the new properties created by Government in the west, even when the game rights are only reserved for the benefit of the peasant owners as a community. This question may give rise to some troubles, but as a general rule it is known from long experience that violent outbreaks result from only two causes—starvation or hopeless tyranny; and the care that is shown by the Irish Executive in furthering the material progress of the country, taken in conjunction with the actual growth of prosperity, which is undeniable, leads us to look forward to the future of Ireland with much confidence and pleasure.

ÆLFRED THE KING.

ROLL back, ye centuries; and thou, oblivious Time,
Lift up thine ancient veil.
Now let the stately march of sounding rhyme
Pour in our ears the tale
Of him, whom clear-voic'd Fame with trumpet-tongue
Acclaims the glorious source whence all our glories first were
sprung.

Hail, Ælfred! Like a mighty battle-tower
Set on a high uplifted signal-hill,
Impregnable in power,
Stedfast and still;—
Like a great rock, that feels the imperious climb
Of the rough beating seas
Round his unshaken knees;—
Thou stand'st the ravage and assault of Time,
O'ertopping twice five hundred cloudy years;
Ours, though ten centuries of stormy fears
Between us roll their flood
Of battles, toils, and blood,
Ours, ours to-day, great King and greater Man,
In whose large heart and brain this living Empire first began.

Dark was thine hour, O England! The wild Dane
Swept with his wild white wings across the seas,
And from his shrieking prey again and yet again
Tore out the quivering life,
Till the red blood ran fast o'er all the abandoned leas;
And faint with its last throes
To dull despair ebb'd out that desperate strife.
Then, in lone Athelney, Ælfred the king uprose,
And called his scattered warriors to his knees,
And bade them lift the Wessex standard high,
March, fight, and conquer!—not lie down and die.
Then flamed the Golden Dragon to the sun;
Then were thy glories, England, well begun;

Then was thine ancient strength, like a great forest tree,
First rooted in the people's heart: for then
Did Saxon Ælfred with his Saxon men
Build that great building, which should grow to be
A temple sacred to the just, the free,—
One Empire, though it stretch from pole to pole and sea to sea.

For that great heart no lust of conquest knew,
But drave a ceaseless sword
Against the people's foes
Till Ethandune brought all the land repose;
Then sheathing the red blade
That in the battle's hottest front had made
His enemies afraid,
A king indeed, to his high kingship true,
Before all men he stood,
And like a mighty prophet, with: "Thus saith the Lord!"
Uplifted Truth and Justice to their place;
And building on the base
Of God's sure law his own,
Founded a glorious throne,
And so established for all time a grateful people's good.

Lord of our outland foes! Tamer of heathen pride!
Far rolls the mighty stream of waters wide,
With full majestic course,
That had in thee their living spring and source.
For thou who badest stand
Walled cities and strong gates to guard this land,
More glorious yet than these,
Gavest us all the seas
For highway of our greatness; fixing fast
Our empire o'er the waves, long as these widening realms
shall last.

Hail, hail to Ælfred! Hail!
Fighter of fights that made a people free,
Framer of laws that taught them what to be;
Around whose kingly name
Yet fuller glories shine,
Bright with the spiritual part of fame
That owns its birth divine.

To him the true Promethean soul was given
That burns to scale the high ascents of heaven ;
 Insatiate with desire
 Of the celestial fire
That glows on those eternal altars fed
Where Truth and Wisdom dwell, with radiant wings out-
spread.

 So was that high heart set,
His people being free, to raise them higher yet ;
 Enkindling in the thick obscure of night
That love of Knowledge which itself is dawning light.

 Hail, hail to Ælfred ! Hail !
Now are the full years ripened for his praise,
 Who in those far-off days
Shaping our island roughness, made it shine ;
Till like a jewel from the cavern'd mine
 Wrought, polish'd, carv'd, and set
 In a king's coronet,
Slowly, at last, it wins its bright imperial way,
Through evil days and good, to the proud place it holds
to-day.

Strength of the nations, Lord our God most high !
 Still make our foes to fly ;
Still give within our borders rich increase,
Blessing our hearths with joyfulness and peace :
 But lest our glorious name
 Be blotted out in shame,
Rebuke the boasting lip, bow down the lofty head,
Now while we think upon great Ælfred dead.
So shall the land that guards that honour'd dust
Bring forth a people like to him—the Strong, the Wise, the
Just.

ADA BARTRICK BAKER.

O U R L . - T .

IF, as goes the song, the policeman's life is not at all times a happy one, the position of locum-tenens in a country parish brimful of traditions has not in every instance been found to be a bed of roses. At such a conclusion, after a fortnight's experience of the habits and customs of our village, had arrived the Rev. Augustus Mainwaring, Fellow and erstwhile Tutor of Trinity College, Oxford, Hertford Scholar, Ireland Scholar, Craven Scholar, and a few other things beside. He was a man who in life, so far as it had gone, might hitherto have been said to have done all things well, a popular member of college society, and a *persona grata* at literary symposia. And yet within the brief space of fourteen days after his arrival in our parish he had more than once been told in so many words that "Us don't hold wi' no strangers in our parts," more than once been pulled up short with the remark, "Well, do you as you likes, sir. But I knows what the Reverend would have done if he'd happened to be here. But lor', there; he is a gentleman."

There was indeed something more than a *soupçon* of truth in Augustus's description of his new surroundings, contained in a letter written to the bursar of his college.

"You ask me how I like the work, &c. There seems to be hardly any work to speak of—

not what you would call work, at least. But the life! I tell you, my dear fellow, there are moments when I am not sure which character I most resemble, Ovid translated into the midst of the Getæ and Sauromatæ, or Paul of Tarsus fighting with wild beasts at Ephesus."

Yes, to that fresh-faced, ruddy-cheeked, and—for all his forty years and deep learning—still juvenile bachelor Augustus, the transition as well from the cultured society of dons and professors as from the creature comforts of the Senior Common-room to the dead-alive existence and the primitive methods of our village partook of the nature of a plunge into unknown, not to say turbulent, waters,—a lapse from an atmosphere of cynical yet self-satisfied Sybaritism to one of barbarous yet equally self-satisfied yokeldom.

Not grudgingly, however, or of necessity, but rather of carefully weighed choice and deliberate forethought, had Augustus agreed to place his services for three months at the disposal of our Rector.

Having for reasons best known to himself, and to the infinite astonishment of his colleagues, suddenly resigned his tutorship, and announced his intention of accepting at no distant date the chance of a college living, he had welcomed a locum-tenancy as

an opportunity of trying his 'prentice hand at parish work and serving his novitiate before finally severing his connection with the old Common-room life. And when our worthy Rector, having developed a parson's throat, and being imperatively ordered abroad for three months, had written to an old Oxford friend and invoked his assistance in the matter of finding a locum-tenens, the friend felt that he was doing a good day's work for all parties by recommending his younger colleague.

"You will like Mainwaring much," he wrote to the Rector; "he is one of the finest scholars of the day and a thorough gentleman."

Accordingly the Rector, having had a most satisfactory interview with Augustus, and fairly won that gentleman's heart—as indeed our Rector won all hearts whether of high or low degree—by the charm of his manner, went off abroad with sad heart, I fear me, but with a light conscience; and in due course the locum-tenens took up his abode in the parsonage, fully prepared at all points to do his duty in the new world of life that now lay before him. To a man coming to a strange house at nine o'clock in the evening, a little fatigued with his journey, even though he had dined sumptuously in the train, it was refreshing to find a few kindly words of welcome from the Rector.

"I trust, my dear sir, that you will make yourself thoroughly at home, and use both

house and servants exactly as if they were your own. You will find my parlour-maid a most trustworthy and dependable person."

Augustus smiled as he read the note, and prepared to act up to the good Rector's suggestion. Having been duly ushered by the trustworthy and dependable person into a cosy little study where a comfortable fire was burning, he asked that his things might be unpacked, and having dismissed the maid had it in his mind to seat himself in a particularly inviting chair which had been placed by the fire-side.

But lo and behold! there was a previous occupant—the Rector's pet wire-haired terrier, which, when politely invited to vacate his position, simply showed his teeth, and briefly stated in canine language that he would see Augustus somewhere first. The parlour-maid, summoned to oust the intruder, declined to interfere in the matter.

"Will you be good enough to have that dog removed," pleaded Augustus; "he is dangerous."

"Oh, but, sir, Jack always sits in here in the evening. I don't know what the master would say if we were to turn him out." And eventually Augustus had to succumb to the force of circumstances, and content himself with a less comfortable chair.

Precisely at ten o'clock the parlour-maid reappeared with a flat candlestick, and, to the intense relief of Augustus, Jack

jumped up and followed her out of the room. An hour later, however, just as Augustus was preparing to get into bed, there came a tremendous bump against the door of his room. After a moment's hesitation he opened the door, whereupon in walked Jack, and having carefully inspected the reverend gentleman's pyjamas, and growled his disapproval of the pattern, ensconced himself in a chair by the fireside, and there asserted his right of proprietorship by growling loudly whenever the occupant of the bed moved, and snoring at intervals on his own account.

As a further instance that the sympathies of the household were with the four-footed animal, the Rector's groom, who called the locum-tenens in the morning, informed him that it was as much as his place was worth to shut Jack up in the stable at night.

"Why, sir, my horse wouldn't get a wink of sleep all night with the old dog's howling."

"I didn't sleep at all well myself," pleaded Augustus; "the beast would growl."

"Lor', sir, you mustn't take no count on his growling. I've heard him growl at master afore now, but he ain't never bitten nobody except the sweep and a district visitor's petticoat, as he tore when he were eating a bone on the door-mat, sin' last Christmas."

Devoutly hoping that he might not be the next victim, Augustus attempted to conciliate Jack, who duly put in an appearance to see that the

stranger ate his breakfast like a gentleman, by giving him a particularly juicy chop-bone; but the upright animal, although it accepted the offering, proceeded to demonstrate how completely proof it was against bribery and corruption by eating the bone on the hearthrug, and growling at the donor whenever he went near it.

"Bother the beast!" exclaimed Augustus, as he finally left the dog in possession of the room and strolled out into the garden to smoke a cigarette.

"What a peaceful scene! No clocks, no bells, no street cries—perfect peace!" he exclaimed, as he walked along a broad gravel-walk bounded on either side by espaliered fruit-trees, and lo! on the word he was assailed by discordant and unmistakably bellicose screams, and suddenly found himself attacked in the region of the ankles by a pinioned bird of the hawk species, which, for some unknown cause, was evidently in a shocking bad temper. Absolutely at his wits' end to account for the extraordinary phenomenon, Augustus beat a speedy retreat, and applied for an explanation to an ancient rustic who was digging in a remote corner of the garden.

"Lor' bless your heart, sir," said the man, scratching his head, "that be our old Tom; he do be what they calls a kestrel. Master he takes main store by old Tom, as has lived here for four years or more."

"But what did the creature want to attack me for?"

"Oh, he most in general do bite any one as goes agin anything he've hidden anywhere."

"Well, where can I walk where he has not hidden anything?" inquired Augustus rather pettishly. The old gardener scratched his head with redoubled vigour, but yet failed to provide an entirely satisfactory answer to the conundrum.

"Well, there ain't nowhere as I knows on, not in the garden leastways. But there's village, you knows, and roads and fields and things, if you was to go and walk along some o' them."

"But does that beastly bird always fly at the Rector like that?" now asked Augustus with rising indignation.

"Times un does and times un doesn't," was the stolid answer. "But lor' bless your heart alive, the master he never takes no account of what old Tom does. But mebbe you'm a bit strange to him."

Having it in his mind to pay a few pastoral visits in the course of the afternoon, Augustus consulted some memoranda which the Rector had left for his guidance.

"Thomas Ives, the parish churchwarden, is a most excellent fellow, and will give you any information you may require as to services, &c."

There being a few minor points of etiquette in the matter of the services about which the locum-tenens was not absolutely clear in his own mind, he wended his way in the direction of Mr Ives's house, which lay at the extreme end of the parish.

A small garden-gate seemed to be the natural approach to what was evidently the front door, and this Augustus for a good ten minutes essayed to open.

Presently he was aware that a baker's boy with a basket of bread on his arm was an interested spectator of his efforts.

"How in the face of the earth does any one ever open this gate, my boy?" asked Augustus, red in the face with his exertions.

"Nobody never did open it, not as I've heard tell on. If you wants to see t'old man, you must go up yard same as other folk. Yon's the gate," and off loafed the baker's boy.

To the yard, then, Augustus bent his steps; but even then he was allowed to see neither the owner of the house nor to have the barren satisfaction of leaving a card, being ignominiously routed by old Tom Ives's celebrated prize gander, which, aided and abetted by a harem of vociferous and apparently man-eating geese, commenced so vigorous an attack that the would-be visitor thought himself lucky in being able to close the yard-gate between himself and further pursuit.

Bravely resisting a half-formed resolution to return to the rectory, pack up his traps, and shake off his shoes the dust, or at any rate the mud, of this most inhospitable village, Augustus stood for a minute outside the yard, partly to recover his breath and partly to determine which of some half-

dozen houses, that he had marked out before starting to visit in the course of the afternoon, should have the preference. Should it be Mrs Higgs, "a well-to-do farmeress, widow, matrimonially inclined," for so the Rector had described her? Should it be "Widow Tarbox, friendly and entertaining old dame," or "John Tomkins, aged 74, sure to want some tobacco"?

Having no tobacco handy, Augustus elected to postpone John Tomkins until such time as in the course of his wanderings he had ascertained the whereabouts of the village shop. Mrs Higgs, whose character he felt that he had hardly studied with sufficient attention before sallying out, he decided to negotiate a week or a fortnight hence, partly with the feeling that an over-speedy attempt to cultivate her acquaintance might be interpreted to imply that the locum-tenens was also "matrimonially inclined," and partly because he fancied that a "well-to-do farmeress" might keep geese, if not turkeys, on an extensive scale. There remained, then, Widow Tarbox, whose character, as described by the Rector, held out some chance of sympathy apart from matrimonial intention. To our locum-tenens, after a slightly tempestuous day, it came as a welcome relief to find that the Widow Tarbox in no way belied the Rector's description. But every rose has, as we know, its thorn, and as it did so happen that the reverend Augustus was one of those people to whom cats are an abomination, it was unfor-

tunate that the widow's tabby should have been of the same way of thinking as the lady of the house—extremely friendly, that is, and most anxious to do the honours of the establishment. The initial purrings and rubbings up against his legs Augustus submitted to, not without shuddering. Even when the beast, in her anxiety to make the visitor feel thoroughly at home, jumped up on to his lap, and waved her tail in his face, he with some difficulty contained his emotions. But when, having comfortably settled herself down upon his knee, puss proceeded, after the manner of her tribe, to test at one and the same time the resisting power of the visitor's nether garments and the condition of her own claws, Augustus started violently and uttered a loud exclamation. As a natural result of the shock the claws now went fairly home, and in another moment the cat was on the floor spitting and swearing. Augustus had sprung from his seat with a lamentable cry, and the widow, who fancied that her visitor had taken sudden leave of his senses, was in a state bordering upon hysterics. When comparative peace and order were restored, it was easy to gather from Mrs Tarbox's demeanour that the saying, "Love me, love my dog," must, when widows are concerned, be taken as extending to cats. Furthermore, the circumstance that the lady's next-door neighbour was a trifle hard of hearing gave our locum-tenens, as he passed along the street, an opportunity of hearing himself described as "Nobbut a pore-

sperrited critter wot was scared o' t' owd cat."

After having had his nerves grievously shaken during the week by altercations with birds and beasts, our locum-tenens was given to understand that his performance at the Sunday services did not give complete satisfaction to the more rational inhabitants of our parish. For he who heretofore had in college circles at Oxford enjoyed no mean reputation as an occasional preacher of pithy and well-balanced sermons, was directly informed by a candid critic that the discourse he delivered from our pulpit was, neither in the matter of quantity nor quality, up to that standard of excellence to which our folk were accustomed. His informant was the parish-clerk, on week-days a carpenter by trade, on Sundays equally remarkable for the vigour of his responses, and the masterful manner in which, with the aid of a long stick, he kept order among some forty children who sat in a gallery at the far end of the church.

This worthy man, as he assisted our locum-tenens to disrobe after the service, not only gave him what might be called a series of hints for young preachers, and sundry reasons for prolonging a sermon, but furthermore indulged in some gloomy forebodings as to his neighbours' ultimate chances of salvation, appearing at the same time to be modestly indifferent about his own.

"Ain't had much practice in preaching, I reckons," he commenced by way of inaugurating the conversation.

"What makes you think so?" inquired Augustus in some surprise.

"Well, we generally counts on having 'arf an hour or more down in these parts. But there, p'raps you hadn't gotten nought more to say."

"Why, do you mean to tell me that you like long sermons?"

"Most in general has 'em, leastways. T'ither way there's some on our folk as is like to find their dinner half cooken, —raw a'most. But what do it matter arter all?"

The connection between the length of his sermon and raw meat was not immediately obvious to Augustus, but a little further inquiry elicited the fact that it was the custom in our parish for Sunday dinners to be left at the baker's on the way to church and called for on the return journey. "And," added the clerk, "I most in general gi'es the bell a pull when the Reverend he do turn round and begin 'And now,' and then baker knows as he've got to begin taking the dishes out of t'oven."

But not in the mere circumstance that by his sins of omission he had seriously interfered with the due enjoyment of the Sunday dinner lay the whole sum of Augustus's offending. For it turned out that Mr Ives, a person much to be considered in our parish, had his own reasons for favouring a lengthy discourse.

"But," exclaimed Augustus with some indignation as the clerk grumbled out something about Mr Ives not being best pleased, "he went fast asleep

directly I had given out my text."

"Yes," assented the clerk, "t' old gemman most in general does, and he don't like a-being woke up afore the proper time, no more don't no one else as I knows on. But to be sure," he went on, by way apparently of letting Augustus down easily, "a young gent like you aren't gotten so much to talk about as our Reverend: he be a main fine talker, surely."

"What does he find to talk to you about for half an hour on a stretch?" inquired Augustus with some curiosity.

The clerk scratched his head and reflected.

"Well," he said at last, "there's a whole mort o' things, not as I can carry 'em all in my head. But," as suddenly the light came, "it do be mostly about hell-fire come Christmas time. Folks as is well-a-nigh starved out wi' cold, they likes to feel as they'll be well took care of 'appen what may. Tarble dear coals is down in our parts this year, that they is."

"But I don't think that is quite the way to take it, is it?" exclaimed the rather shocked Augustus. "You do not want to go to that place surely?"

"Reckon as folk'll have to go where they be took. 'Tis bigger nor t'other place seemingly, and I counts as they aren't a-going to have heaven mullocked up wi' a lot o' poor folk."

Not, however, until the night when he found himself acting as the *ex-officio* president of our annual choir supper did the Rev. Augustus begin to entertain dire misgivings as to the

wisdom shown by a not undistinguished member of a refined college circle when he proposes to seek a haven of rest for his declining years in the primitive life of a country village. He had mentally compared himself to Saul of Tarsus at a comparatively early stage of his new experience, but Christmas Day had come and gone before he found himself entirely sympathising with "*Naso ademptus*."

A few words first as to the origin of that choir supper. Ours had always been a voluntary choir—voluntary, that is, so far as the adult members were concerned. The boys were paid at the rate of twopence a Sunday; and if much screeching is to be held as a criterion of merit, they may be said to have earned their money. A few women gave their services, partly, perhaps, because their elevated position supplied fair opportunity for showing off their Sunday bonnets; but the men came, induced in some cases by a love of singing, in others, I fear me, by forethought for good cheer and free drinks on two nights in the year. Handed down from time immemorial had been the custom that the male portion of the choir should stump the parish on Christmas Eve, and favour the gentry with some carols. The procession used to start at about nine o'clock, well wrapped up in greatcoats and thick mufflers, the latter being often tied over the mouth as well to keep out the cold as to promote a more melodious style of music. And it was a recognised rule of the

game that the first calling-place should be old Tom Campion's, because it was felt that a liberal half tumbler of hot and strong old port wine was no bad thing to start the evening upon. Having exhausted old Tom's hospitality, the vocalists next tramped on to Widow Higgs, famous for hot spiced ale with rosy-cheeked apples floating there in. "Sherry white wine," I have occasion to believe, was partaken of in Thomas Ives's kitchen; and it was held advisable that the rectory should be next visited before one or perhaps more members of the original party should have fallen out by the way. There hot elder wine with dry toast went the rounds, producing a more or less sobering effect; and after the Rector's cook, who dispensed the hospitality, had been duly kissed or left unknissed, according to her fancy, the "Reverend" himself appeared, sipped a sherry glass of the elder wine, and wished the party "Good night" and a "Happy Christmas." Then the changes were rung on some other half dozen houses, and finally the remains of the party either staggered home or slept by the roadside.

"Now and agin," quoth my man Alfred to me—Alfred, I should say, is a better toper than he is tenor—"us goes and gives old George 'Uggins a call, when us has done wi' t'other folk."

"Why, you don't get much there, Alfred," I said, knowing that the man Huggins was not only a staunch dissenter, but cross-grained and close-fisted to a degree.

"Us has un out of bed least-ways, and then he sets to and calls us pretty nigh anythink as he can lay his tongue to."

"Then you don't get much out of going, as I said before, Alfred."

"Well, us loikes to be neborly, come Christmas."

It was some years before our worthy Rector wholly grasped the position. When it did at last dawn upon him that a good many other people besides himself were in the habit of dispensing hospitality to the carol-singers, he instituted a searching inquiry, and, satisfied that our choirmen drank a good deal more than was good for them on Christmas Eve, put his foot down firmly, and at some personal cost instituted a radical reform. The days of hot port wine, hot spiced ale, cold sherry wine, &c., were to be numbered, and George Huggins was to be left to sleep in peace. By way of compensation the Rector undertook to provide at his own expense on Boxing Day a supper for the choirmen, and the latter were at liberty to provide for themselves a second supper from contributions to be made in specie by those of the "gentry" who desired to listen to the carol-singers.

It was at the Boxing Day feast that Augustus had been endeavouring to perform the manifold duties of president. Most conscientiously—it might indeed with truth be said most painfully—had he done his best to live up to the situation, and to conform with the customs of the evening.

"The Reverend," so the head-

man of the choir, playing the part of master of ceremonies, had whispered in his ear, "most in general does this," or again "most in general says that"; and right manfully had Augustus essayed to prove himself a worthy locum-tenens, even, maugre a weak digestion, partaking of pudding before meat as well as after it. The supper, which had originally started as a three-course meal, had, after the first year, developed even a fourth course, a substantial Yorkshire pudding preceding instead of accompanying the roast beef. For it had appeared in the light of a grievance that those hungry mortals who happened to prefer mutton to beef should by reason of this preference be defrauded of their Yorkshire pudding. And it will be admitted that by the time a choirman had discussed Yorkshire pudding, two or three goodly helpings of a hot joint, a couple of slices of plum-pudding, eaten in company with one or more mince pies,—“them ere little poys,” as Alfred called them, though their circumference was that of a saucer,—and a solid wedge of strong cheese, there were seldom any vacant chinks to fill up. If Mentor’s whispered hints were to be believed, it was the Reverend’s habit to go right through the programme, partaking of every dish, with the oriental idea perhaps of convincing his guests that there was no danger of any one being poisoned. By the time, therefore, that the table was cleared, Augustus felt about as uncomfortable as a man who has over-

eaten himself against his will has every right to feel.

“Reverend most in general says ‘Pipes now, gemmen,’” whispered Mentor.

And on the word in came a goodly array of churchwardens and black tobacco, and there ensued a period of solid and comparatively silent smoking. At the conclusion of this digestive process there came another loud whisper from Mentor.

“Reverend most in general asks Master John Adkins to oblige wi’ a song.”

Mr Adkins being pressed to oblige seemed to hesitate. It appeared that Augustus had omitted to name the song, and although the circumstance that Mr Adkins only knew one song might have been held to condone the offence of omitting to name it, our chairman was given to understand that he had done the wrong thing.

“Could you give us ‘In the Gloaming,’ Mr Adkins?” he now suggested, being duly prompted to that effect by Mentor; and Mr Adkins was kind enough to signify his assent, and amidst the most unsentimental surroundings to growl out the pathetic ditty.

The end came at last, but no applause followed, and our locum-tenens, with a sort of feeling that it was rather unkind to let the performance pass without a single note of congratulation, had just opened his mouth to speak a word of compliment when a vigorous tug at his sleeve and an expressive frown from Mentor warned him that there was something to follow.

"A main sight better for her if old John Adkins had any-think to do wi' it," and at the joke—an annual joke evidently—the whole company burst into a hoarse roar of laughter.

"Bra—vo, Muster Al-freed!" exclaimed first one and then another, for this merry jest had emanated from no less a personage. "Here's health and song, John Adkins."

The call now rested with John Adkins, and he evidently acted up to the traditions of the feast in requesting that the chairman would oblige the company.

"The Reverend most in general says as he onny knows tune t'owd cow died on." But Mentor's warning voice fell upon ears dull to receive the words of wisdom.

"But I do sing," promptly exclaimed Augustus, not a little tired of being expected in all matters to play second fiddle to the Rector, and determined so far to assert himself as to prove to the company that, if he could not preach quite such long sermons as his elder brother of the cloth could, he could at any rate sing a little better than John Adkins.

It was a pity perhaps that he should have elected to recount the lamentable tale of Alonzo and Imogen, because in the first place it was too long; in the second place it did not in the least degree appeal to his audience; and finally, it was contrary to precedent for the chairman to sing at all. Moreover, it was em-

barrassing that Alfred, at each recurring pause, should presently have taken upon himself to exclaim, "Chorus, please, gemmen," and then to bellow out to a tune of his own composing—

"H'Alonzer he were brave,
And H'Alonzer he were strong,
And so unto the wars he went,
But didn't stop there long."

But the thing that fairly broke the singer's heart was a question, too evidently a *bona fide* question, emanating from the vice-chairman.

There had followed the song a prolonged whispered discussion at the far end of the table, and finally the vice-chairman rose from his seat, and, amidst profound silence, gravely enquired—

"I say, Muster Chairman, were that comic?"

"Well, yes, to a certain extent so," replied Augustus, hesitating.

"There, then, I said it were," in a voice of triumph; "but Bill Dyer, he would have it as it were a anthem like from furrin parts. That's 'arf a pint to me, Bill!"

An hour later when, with aching head and severe internal pains, Augustus vacated the chair and returned to the rectory, he had quite made up his mind that the Getæ and Sauro-matæ were comparatively civilised nationalities.

Augustus is now vice-president of his college, and popularly reported to be a likely candidate for the presidency when that important office falls vacant.

MUSINGS WITHOUT METHOD.

THE PALM WITHOUT THE DUST—LORD ROSEBERY'S LASSITUDE—HIS POLITICAL UNCERTAINTY—THE CREATION OF MR GLADSTONE—THE FAVOURITE OF THE PRESS—LORD CHESTERFIELD'S 'LETTERS'—THE WORLD'S MISUNDERSTANDING—HIS MORALITY—HIS POLITICAL WISDOM AND PRESCIENCE—MR CAINE AND HIS RIVAL—THE VIRTUE OF IMAGINATION—A SURFEIT OF EMOTION—AN EGYPTIAN PLEASANTRY.

"DALMENY is one of those," said an Eton master some forty years ago, "who like the palm without the dust;" and assuredly Lord Rosebery has won more palms with less dust than the most of men. He has been Prime Minister, he has won the Derby, and neither enterprise, we may suppose, has taxed his energies to the utmost. Eager to win yet timid of the contest, he prefers, as in his schooldays, an easy triumph. He would still let the laurel adorn his brow; but the noise and hazard of the arena are so bitterly distasteful to him, that when he might achieve another brilliant victory he scratches his name and lets an outsider pass the post.

And so he has reached at last the poor pinnacle of his career, and that pinnacle is marked ineffective ambition. Never, indeed, did he scale so chill a height of inaction as when he declared to the Liberals of the City that he "must proceed alone." A remnant of his party, always loyal to him, would once again have accepted his leadership; yet Lord Rosebery, according to his own agricultural metaphor, prefers the solitary furrow. He has chosen the profession of politics; he is an

assiduous critic both of friends and foes; yet when he is asked to proclaim a policy, or to consolidate a party, he is fearful and dilatory. He is a Nicias who translates hesitation into inertness, a Fabius who delays so strenuously that he never comes into action. Nor would his temperament and character be an inconvenience to the State had he not usurped a sort of leadership. The destruction of party government, designed by the stiff-necked arrogance of Mr Gladstone, who forced his servants to suspend their private judgment, has been confirmed by Lord Rosebery, who, accepting the leadership, is determined not to lead. Now, he is waiting for the call of the people; now, he is unhappy because the Liberal Unionists decline to support him who was a member of the Home Rule Cabinet. But whatever the cause, the result is the same. Lord Rosebery retires in an oratorical flourish, and leaves us regretting that he ever deserted his library and his stable to dally with the sterner duties of government.

How, then, shall we explain this aggressive lassitude? It is due, first of all, to a cunningly unstable character. It has been

wisely pointed out that in sketching an Archibald Primrose of the seventeenth century, Bishop Burnet was drawing a prophetic portrait of the present Lord Rosebery. Yet even this comparison implies a certain flattery. While both the Primroses are adroit,—while both are for “soft counsels and slow methods,”—the last of them is scarcely so dexterous as his ancestor. The Lord Rosebery whom we know can hardly be said to have “an art of speaking to all men according to their sense of things, and so to draw out their secrets, while he concealed his own.” Truly he may conceal such secrets as he has, but he is seldom successful in surprising the secrets of others. For the fact is, his brain is uncertain rather than subtle. A study of his speeches propounds a question, where it does not extract response. What does he mean by it all? you are impelled to ask, even if you admire the orator’s easy trick of refusing an answer. And you come to the conclusion that he means little or nothing. Mr Gladstone escaped notice, because at one time or another he expressed all opinions: he might be inconsistent with his party; he could hardly be inconsistent with himself. Where there was not a safeguard—an *an* or an *if*—there was an ancient view, anciently held, which did not conflict with the more modern inspiration. But with a dexterity which his ancestor might have envied, Lord Rosebery says very little in many words. He is not wholly commonplace, yet he is never

outspoken or original. Literature and politics are alike a pleasant incentive to his Muse, who is sworn neither to pledge his credit nor to surprise his friends. For many years Lord Rosebery was a professed Home-Ruler, bound to separation “by every tie of honour and of policy.” But if you ask for a lucid declaration you will be disappointed to find nothing clearer than vague surmises of “Home Rule all round,” and a few broken words concerning Imperial Federation. In brief, if we put aside the reform of the Upper House, we shall find no question on which Lord Rosebery candidly supports the party he calls his own; and, further, that the more clearly defined is his opinion, the more bitterly is it opposed to the creed of the Radicals. He is an Imperialist, for instance, and he has always been an Imperialist; but not even the surrender after Majuba, of which he disapproved, availed to weaken the influence of Mr Gladstone; and he witnessed the sacrifice of Gordon without roughly overturning the chair of office.

Thus is it that to high rank and a love of affairs he brings no passionate conviction, no reckless enthusiasm. Moreover, the defects of an inactive temperament have been intensified fivefold by a hapless education. For Lord Rosebery was at once the creation and the creature of Mr Gladstone. That cunning parliamentarian discovered the young Scottish peer, foresaw his possibilities of usefulness, and thrust him as soon as might be into office. At the very out-

set Lord Rosebery displayed his natural insecurity. Within a brief space he had refused, accepted, and resigned an under-secretaryship. But Mr Gladstone did not despair, and the famous Mid-Lothian campaigns assured Lord Rosebery's position in the Liberal party. No worse training could be desired for a young politician. Henceforth Lord Rosebery was hypnotised with the rest; like Mr Childers and many another, he tacitly sanctioned deeds which he could not approve, and with Mr Gladstone's eye upon him he doubtless found a certain merit in the performance. Disagreements there were—so much is matter of common knowledge—and Lord Rosebery took a malicious pleasure in recalling them to the memory of the City Fathers. But Gladstone suppressed insubordination by a method of his own, and the world heard no note of discord. "With that marvellous gift of eloquence and rhetoric," says Lord Rosebery, "as rich as the curtain of the temple of old, he veiled those discrepancies and that nakedness from the public." The party, in fact, was the party of one man, and if the Liberals are now without a leader, it is largely because no one could emerge from the tutelage of Mr Gladstone into an independent command. Obedience he enjoined upon his followers—obedience dumb and unquestioning; but he could not impart the secrets of leadership, which for him consisted in the marvellous gift of rhetoric, "rich as the curtain," &c., and in a personality which claimed submission without rule or reason. In

brief, suppression was a necessity of the Gladstonian policy, and Mr Chamberlain alone, of the younger lieutenants trained by Gladstone, has had the energy and the candour to throw off the heavy allegiance.

But upon Lord Rosebery the influence of Mr Gladstone was doubly unfortunate. Not only was the Imperialist forced to subscribe to measures which he could not approve, but he was protected from criticism beneath his leader's vast umbrella of responsibility. So he led a sheltered life, immune from the insolence of journals and from the angry clamour of his opponents. Whatever he achieved of good or ill was put down to the wisdom or the folly of Mr Gladstone, and, until that Minister's retirement, Lord Rosebery could snap his fingers in the face of the press. But once in the seat of authority, he was naturally assailed in his own person: he discovered that criticism is not always welcome to the sensitive, and though amiably received for the most part, he proved that his training had rendered him unfit for the rough and tumble of political strife. Moreover, he had not acquired the gifts without which a party leader is bound to fail. He was not an adept in that art of "patching up old clothes" which in Mr Gladstone's phrase a Prime Minister was called to exercise. He was, maybe, too simple, too honest, or too timid for his post. But the truth is, he could neither frame a fighting policy nor force his opinions upon his colleagues. Doubtless he gave a wider scope to his

Imperialism when he was free of Mr Gladstone's control, and thus severed himself still farther from those who should have followed him. But whatever the cause of failure, his leadership was brief as ineffectual. He resigned in favour of a politician who devoted to the service of the party a fine set of variable and inconsistent views. And now he himself has come valiantly forth as an independent adviser. He is willing to give his country the fruit of his vast wisdom and long experience. He would play the part of Pitt from an Opposition bench. The offer would be pathetic, if it were not also a little grotesque. It is true that our Radical Prime Minister has chosen for his prime heroes Chatham, Pitt the younger, and Napoleon; but the example of these tyrants should have trained him to a better way: an admiration of their high courage might have inspired him with a proud patriotism. They at any rate were never haunted by bogeys; they saw their country's real danger and faced it. Yet Lord Rosebery, being an impartial adviser, is still haunted by bogeys. Now, the ignorance of Britain appals him; now, he shudders at the proximity of France; and the astounding speech he delivered some time since before the tremulous Lords on the risk of foreign invasion should disqualify him for ever from assuming the ambitious rôle of counsellor. "I have no party," he retorted upon Lord James of Hereford the other day, and, he might have added, "no policy." Why, then, should he perplex

himself with politics? He has more resources than most disappointed statesmen have been able to boast. Grafton sought solace in Newmarket and Nancy Parsons; Charles James Fox flew to Porson's 'Orestes,' and owned that he felt "quite excusable in giving more attention to Euripides than to either House of Parliament." Lord Rosebery has had a more glorious career on the Turf than fell to the lot of Grafton; he is a more distinguished man of letters than Fox. He may therefore without despair alternate his refuge, and when he has bred another Derby winner surprise our admiration by another monograph.

But more strange than his vacillating career is his unbroken popularity. Being a leader, he may demand to be led, he may throw over his party at its worst crisis, but he cannot destroy the people's interest. No public man of our day has a more generous notice of the press which he fears; his name is rarely absent from our newspapers, and his triumphs either on the racecourse or in the field of letters are always joyously acclaimed. What, then, is the secret of this general esteem? We believe it is Lord Rosebery's versatility. Like Mr Gladstone, he touches the world at many points, and at each point he awakens a new public. A mere politician must needs appeal to a few; a politician who dabbles in letters and wins the Derby may easily become the people's idol. For the reputation of Lord Rosebery, like most other reputations, was made and is sup-

ported by the press, and the press likes no one so well as the man who does something else. It is dry work applauding a politician; but a politician who has won the Derby or has written a book is as interesting as a peer who turns faith-healer, or as an actor who reads the lessons in church. Besides, there is the sporting instinct to admire a man who cut all previous records by being Prime Minister and winning the Derby twice. To such a hero much timidity and tergiversation may be forgiven, and Lord Rosebery can explain all the fame which an indulgent press has brought him. But the press, for all its arrogance, is not yet omnipotent, and is daily weakening its influence by a reckless disregard of truth. It can force the world to talk about this man or that; it cannot ensure any man's acceptance. In other words, it has the power of nomination and none other. Accordingly, it has nominated Lord Rosebery for every position to which wealth and intelligence may aspire, but its nomination has not been ratified, and in its despite Lord Rosebery will probably remain "dissociated and isolated" until the end. Fifteen years ago Mr Gladstone declared him "the man of the future"; a man of the future he remains to-day—with a shorter time of fulfilment.

When Lord Rosebery, in his panegyric of Gladstone, desired a parallel for the lettered

statesman, he turned to the eighteenth century and chose Chesterfield. And truly few men of his age excelled Chesterfield either in wit or in affairs. Yet, by a misfortune which often overtakes the greatest men, Chesterfield has been persistently and deliberately misunderstood. He has been set down as a preacher and practitioner of loose morals by critics who cannot have read his famous 'Letters,' and he has been summarily dismissed from the field of politics as a kind of fashionable Mugwump. But he was in reality serious both in politics and morals. He spent many years in attempting to train up a son in the way he should go, and the experiment failed, because it was too ambitious for practical life. He was perhaps the wisest Viceroy that ever went to Ireland, and he was endowed with the gift of political prophecy in a higher degree than any of his contemporaries. And he has been universally execrated. His latest editor, however, has made a loyal attempt to revise the hasty, ill-formed judgment of his predecessors. He has given us a complete text of the 'Letters to his Son,'¹ and he has prefaced them with an essay which is just, lucid, and well-written, so that a rash judgment will seem in the future even more reprehensible. Here, within a brief compass, are all the facts, and if, after a loyal study of them, Chesterfield still appears a monster of worldliness and chicanery, then

¹ The Letters of Lord Chesterfield to his Son. Edited by Charles Strachey. London: Methuen.

argument is useless and truth eclipsed.

Why, indeed, should this elegant wit and polished man of the world have won the evil opinion of many generations? The old proverb affords an answer: "Give a dog a bad name, and hang him." It is a popular superstition that time corrects immature judgments, and sets in their proper places the over-maligned and the too-much-bepraised. But, alas! time seldom works such miracles as this. Fame, said a cunning aspirant, is a very subtle thing, and once acquired fame (or ill-fame) is not easily snatched away. An intriguing man may compel his contemporaries to take him at his own valuation, and if no casual exposure intervene, posterity, which will probably dislike research, agrees with the intriguer's contemporaries. For justice can only be done to the dead by those who do not shrink from study, and it is obviously easier to accept a well-worn judgment than to discover the truth in musty documents.

It was the first and greatest of Lord Chesterfield's misfortunes to quarrel with Dr Johnson, who not only had the heavy hand of a fierce hater, but who caught and has held the ear of the whole world. Thousands who never read one line of Chesterfield's writing remember Johnson's intolerant phrase, "the morals of a whore and the manners of a dancing-master." On more than one occasion Johnson modified the opinion, which was nothing better than the expression of a bitter pre-

judice. The story is familiar enough. Johnson offered to Chesterfield the patronage of his dictionary. Chesterfield construed the duties of patron somewhat niggardly. He sent Johnson £10, and seems to have forgotten all about it. The masterpiece was wellnigh finished. Then he heralded its coming in the 'World.' Johnson took an ample and characteristic revenge: he wrote the celebrated letter, wherein he asked the celebrated question, "Is not a patron, my lord, one who looks with unconcern on a man struggling for life in the water, and, when he has reached ground, encumbers him with help?" He composed a definition in his dictionary which holds its own beside that other definition of an exciseman. A patron, said he, is "commonly a wretch who supports with insolence, and is paid by flattery"; and he emendated a line in his satire: "toil, envy, want, the *patron*, and the jail." The battery was heavy to punish so slight an offence, and Chesterfield met the attack with characteristic indifference. He took an open pleasure in Johnson's letter. He read it to Dodsley, and confessed, "this man has great power," and yet by his attitude denied the Doctor's power to wound him. In brief, both men behaved well, and in accordance with their character, and it is not likely that either cherished resentment when the incident was closed. But Johnson's phrase was remembered by those who forgot the Earl's offence, and it has been the common verdict.

Yet one method of disproof has always been at hand: a study of the letters themselves, which inculcate nothing save order and decency, honour and honesty. Nowhere else in literature will you find a wiser sympathy with the young, a deeper comprehension of the folly and heedlessness of youth. Chesterfield's own temperament confirms what he more than once hints, that he was a prig at Cambridge and elsewhere; and it is easy to believe that in the best sense he was never young. But he understood youth so well, that he wrote to his son not as a superior, but as an equal friend. "I am not stoically advising, nor parsonically preaching to you to be a Stoic at your age," he wrote with excellent wisdom, and knowing the circumstances of court life he gave such counsel as he knew would be useful. But never does he underrate or obscure the essential necessity of virtue, while he puts the attainments of a gentleman in a just and proper order. "What is the way, then," he asks, "to arrive at that perfection which you promise me to aim at? It is, first, to do your duty towards God and man; without which everything else signifies nothing: secondly, to acquire great knowledge; without which you will be a very contemptible man, though you may be a very honest one: and lastly, to be very well-bred; without which you will be a very disagreeable, un-

pleasing man, though you should be an honest and a learned one." Are these the words of a hard immoral cynic? If they are, we give up the case, for they are to be found on every page of the 'Letters.'

Nor does he ever leave in doubt which qualities are subordinate. Religion he frankly resigns to Mr Harte, because he rightly believed that that eminent divine was better equipped than himself for its inculcation. He even goes so far as to allow that dancing and dress are "very trifling, silly things," but, says he with admirable wisdom, there is no reason why men of sense should not do them well. In other words, "Diogenes the Cynic was a wise man for despising a thousand foolish customs; but a fool for showing it." Similarly, he points out to his son that if he affects gallantry, he must affect it as a gentleman, not as a rake; and it is this injunction which has been construed by a strange anachronism into what nowadays is called "vice." Again, we wonder if the critics of Chesterfield have ever read his 'Letters'; for most assuredly, if the writer himself perused the modern commentaries, he would have every right to own himself puzzled. He set out to teach a boy, naturally deficient in elegance, the stern duties of scholarship, and the plain necessity of good manners. He kept him so severely at work that had he been a rake he had still lacked leisure; and he insisted with laudable fre-

quency that good behaviour, a pleasant mien, a scrupulous restraint, were the adornments of a gentleman. More than all things, he hated superficiality: "approfondissez," he says again and again to his son, who was perhaps by nature indolent; and consideration for others was for him the very essence of good-breeding. Yet he has been so fiercely blamed for his high ideals by many generations of men, who despise the trifling, amiable side of life, that it seems as if honesty and good manners are incompatible. Is there, then, a merit in boorishness? Does it not matter in what guise a man presents himself to the world? Of course there is a vast demerit in boorishness, and no man is the better or more moral for seeming a churl. The world is governed, and will always be governed, by charm as well as by virtue; and Lord Chesterfield in his 'Letters,' which are a masterpiece in the art of presentation, candidly admits this truth. Marlborough, says he, owed much to the Graces. For this heresy no mercy has been shown him. He has been censured, ever since his book saw the light, because he did not pack a treatise upon good-breeding with the maxims of a trite morality; which is as foolish as though we reproached a grave politician with walking very ill upon the tight-rope.

But the detractors of this eminent man do him an injustice which does not touch his writings. They are so eager to dismiss him as a trifler and a cynic, the two personages he most bitterly disliked, that they

forget his political wisdom and the services which he did to the State. Had he lived in a happier reign he would doubtless have attained the highest offices. But he was too independent in spirit to conciliate George II., he was too fiercely opposed to privilege and corruption to satisfy his colleagues. However, the few offices which were conferred upon him he held with dignity and distinction. Above all, he had his way, and opposed the king's insolence with an insolence of his own. When the Secretary of State, objecting to the appointment of Dr Chevenix to an Irish bishopric, declared that his Majesty advised him to look out for another bishopric, Chesterfield "begged his lordship would desire the king to look out for another Lord-Lieutenant." A letter which he addressed at the same time to the Duke of Newcastle does credit to his candour, but it suggests a reason why the king and his advisers did not often invite him to their councils.

"I am sorry your Grace and my two predecessors here," thus he wrote, "have had so much trouble about my ecclesiastical recommendations, which, were it not for the sakes of the persons concern'd, I am very indifferent about: because the refusal would save me a great deal of trouble, and restore me to that kind of life which I unwillingly left and shall most willingly return to. If my recommendation to the dirtiest bishopric in Ireland is not to prevail, it can only be because it is mine: an indignity by which I am distinguished from all my Predecessors, and to which I will upon no account submit, and I think it but fair to give Your Grace and our friends notice, that upon this foot I will not be Lord-Lieutenant one hour after my arrival in London."

Of course such argument as this prevailed, and Lord Chesterfield proved himself an admirable administrator. On this and on every other ground full and reasoned justice is done him in Mr Charles Strachey's excellent appreciation, to which we would add, and from which we would detract, nothing. In Ireland, at any rate, he was neither cynical nor finicking. He could scarcely have arrived in Dublin at a more hazardous moment; yet never for one moment did he lose grasp of the situation. On the one hand he was as conciliatory as he might be, on the other he prepared so strong a force that Ireland would have been helpless, even if she had been bent upon rebellion. "If the Irish behave as faithful subjects," said he to an agent of the Pretender, "they shall be treated as such; but if they act in a different manner, I shall be worse to them than Cromwell." Even with the Pretender at Derby and the Hanoverian dynasty in peril, Ireland under the rule of Chesterfield remained loyal. His first step was salutary and characteristic: he appointed as private secretary "a very genteel pretty young fellow, but not a man of business," and he justified the appointment at the first interview. "Sir," said he to the secretary, "you will receive the emoluments of your place, but I will do the business myself, being determined to have no First Minister." Nor did he rely on any man's assistance. Accessible to all, he received any Irishman who would prefer a petition with a shrewd and kindly air of authority.

Of the religious acrimony which then divided Ireland more bitterly even than to-day he made no account, and when he was told that his own coachman was a papist and went to Mass, "Does he indeed?" he replied; "I will take care that he shall never carry me there." While he attempted to mitigate the fierceness of bigotry, he did not neglect more practical methods of reform: he encouraged the industries of Ireland, and he did his best to suppress favouritism. But he expressed his aim so well in a letter to Mr Prior that nothing need be added to his own words.

"These are the sorts of jobs," says he of sundry manufactures, "that I wish people in Ireland would attend to with as much industry and care as they do to jobs of a very different nature. . . . Think of your manufactures at least as much as of your militia, and be as much upon your guard against Poverty as against Popery: take my word for it, you are in more danger of the former than of the latter."

And in another letter, also quoted by Mr Strachey, he says in the proper tone of irony:—

"I am sensible that I shall be reckoned a very shallow politician for my attention to such trifling objects as the improvement of your lands, the extension of your manufactures, and the increase of your trade, which only tend to the advantages of the public: whereas an able Lord - Lieutenant ought to employ his thoughts in greater matters. He should think of jobs for favourites, sops for enemies, managing parties, and engaging Parliaments to vote away their own and their fellow - subjects' liberties and properties. But these great acts of Government, I confess, are above me, and people should not go out of their depth."

Such was the humour in which he approached the task

of government, and it is no wonder that he succeeded. The compliment which he paid Ireland should still be remembered there with pride. "I would much rather be distinguished," he declared, "by the name of the *Irish Lord-Lieutenant* than by that of the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland."

And while Chesterfield did his best for Ireland, Ireland repaid his zeal with enthusiasm. When he left he was followed to the boat by sorrowing thousands, and his name is still a wholesome tradition. Even the king was satisfied, marvelling at "the Spirit, the Solidity, and the *Bravery*" of a certain despatch. "Chesterfield is in the right," said he; "it is the wisest letter that ever was wrote." But the truth is that Chesterfield was not only a wise administrator but a political philosopher to boot. He saw what should be done, and more than once was able to do it. The boon which he conferred upon the country by reconciling Pitt and Newcastle cannot be estimated, and he achieved the reconciliation in spite of his own private feeling. He had no "partiality" for Pitt—so much he confesses—but he saw that Pitt was the only man who could save the country, and he patched up the necessary truce. But his greatest achievement was to foretell—in 1753—the French Revolution; and if politics be anything better than guesswork, Chesterfield's prescience cannot be too highly admired. He knew the state of France as no contemporary knew it, and from the familiar facts he drew the

true, the inevitable conclusion. "Wherever you are," writes he to his son, "inform yourself minutely of, and attend particularly to, the affairs of France: they grow serious, and, in my opinion, will grow more and more so every day." And having pictured the king despised, the Ministers disunited, the people poor, and consequently discontented, he points out that "armies, though always the supporters and tools of absolute power for the time being, are always the destroyers of it too," and concludes with these memorable words: "In short, all the symptoms which I have ever met with in history previous to great changes and revolutions in government, now exist and daily increase in France." Is there a single living politician who can read thus clearly the lessons of history? Yet Chesterfield thus read the lessons of his time, and is dismissed with a quip or an epigram.

Besides the animosity of Johnson, there is another reason why Chesterfield should have incurred the general hatred. He was a wit, and he was a wit who practised the dangerous art of irony. He knew the risk which he ran perfectly well, and wisely warned his son against a bitter tongue. "That ready wit," says he, "which you so partially allow me, and so justly Sir Charles Williams, may create many admirers; but, take my word for it, it makes few friends. It shines and dazzles like the noonday sun, but, like that too, is very apt to scorch, and therefore is always feared. . . . Never seek

for wit: if it presents itself, well and good; but even in that case, let your judgment interpose; and pray take care that it be not at the expense of anybody." Happily for us, Lord Chesterfield did not carry his theory into practice. He dared to exercise his wit even on the majesty of the king, to whom, when he refused to sign a certain commission, saying he would rather sign a commission for the devil, Chesterfield retorted: "I only beg leave to put your Majesty in mind that the commission is indited to our right trusty and right well-beloved cousin." What could the king do but laugh and assent: "My lord, do as you please"? Better still was his famous address to the House of Lords. "Wit, my lords, is a sort of property," said he; "it is the property of those who have it, and too often the only property they have to depend on. It is indeed but a precarious dependence. Thank God! we, my lords, have a dependence of another kind; we have a much less precarious support, and therefore cannot feel the inconveniences of the bill now before us." That is an irony which does not make friends, and Chesterfield has suffered for his temperament. Of course his superiority of mind bred an indifference to the general opinion, and it is unlikely that he would have resented the censure of those whose vanity he had wounded. But the best refutation of the general opinion is his own works. If Chesterfield failed in his main object of con-

verting his simple son into a polished gentleman, he at least revealed himself a man of the world in the best sense, a strange mixture of *badinage* with high seriousness, a moralist who never sinks to the prig, a scholar who scorns the narrowness of the pedant. Above all, we esteem his gift of sympathy. Self-centred as he was, he was always unselfish where his son's interest was involved. His patience and amiability are equal to the severest strain, and, for all his vanity, he subordinates even that, if only he may be corrected by Philip Stanhope.

Mr Hall Caine, we fear, has not taken to heart the injunction of Lord Chesterfield. He, at any rate, has not troubled to remember the Graces. His last performance — entitled 'The Eternal City'¹ — has no grace of thought, of diction, or of fancy. Vague meanings are expressed in empty, turgid words; fantastic images are asked to light up the baldest facts; tarns and glaciers and boulders pretend to illuminate a Roman sunrise; and on every page, in every line, rhetoric and vanity make sense impossible. At one moment we are confronted with appalling commonplace: "nations sink and rise," Mr Caine discovers, "but humanity is immortal." At another, a jumble of meaningless words pretends to hide a profound thought, and we are seriously told that "humanity is the Pope of the Twentieth Century." But we must not

¹ The Eternal City. By Hall Caine. London: William Heinemann.

too narrowly examine Mr Caine's argument; the paltry blemishes which we have named were suggested by the voice of detraction; for with all his faults he has one virtue—the virtue of imagination—which he shares with no more than one contemporary. Now, imagination may be defined as the art of writing eloquently about what you do not know. Any fool, it is obvious, can describe what he has seen or heard. It takes a great man to imagine. And in this trick of imagination Mr Hall Caine need fear no competitor, save only Miss Corelli. Perhaps we must place the talented lady rather higher than Mr Caine, for while she knows rather less than he, she imagines a good deal more. But both brows wear the bays, and though the artistic temperament cannot wholly escape jealousy, the world may listen to the amœbean strains with pleasure unalloyed.

Miss Corelli went to Rome, and a similar impulse drove Mr Caine to the Eternal City. It is idle to inquire which went there first: for us the ground of satisfaction is that they both found their way to the cradle of culture and of faith. Of course they might have gone to Athens or to Margate. But they refrained from these popular resorts. They went to Rome, and it is not for us to regret it. The admirable results of Miss Corelli's research have long been before the world, and Mr Caine's discoveries, if not quite so bold, are at least as valuable. For he, too, carries us away into a world of art and faith, of vice and beauty; but,

as becomes a sterner talent, he reveals unto us also the secrets of politics. And his courage is equal to his imagination. The Pope and the King of Italy are both puppets in his hand, nor does he hesitate, under the guise of romance, to discuss the profoundest questions which agitate statesmen and theologians. But it is time to approach his masterpiece more nearly, and to hint what treasures will reward the reader's curiosity.

David Rossi, or David Leone, is the son of the Pope, though neither he nor his august father know the horrid truth; and he first appears before us in the streets of London with a frozen squirrel under his arm. A philanthropic doctor of Soho picks him up, restores him to life, and educates him as his son. The doctor, of course, is a prince in disguise, exiled for his Liberal opinions, and the Pope's son and the Prince's daughter grow up together. Twenty years elapse, for Mr Caine is no pedant on the unities, and while David has grown into a first-class agitator, Roma—such is the name of the Princess—has taken Italy by storm. She is beautiful, she is wicked. Her abundant hair is raven-black, her complexion has a golden tint, her violet eyes have “a slight recklessness of expression.” Nor is this all. She has *lived*—at least so says the English diplomatist, and “lived,” as it turns out, with the Prime Minister of Italy. Now, Signor Bonelli, the Prime Minister, is a really admirable villain. We do not believe that the old Adelphi ever provided

a better specimen, and that is high praise indeed. And when David Rossi in a public speech couples his name with the golden-tinted lady, the fat (so to say) is in the fire. The old-fashioned drama of Samson and Delilah begins again. Roma, thirsting for revenge, swears that she will shear the locks of David, and Bonelli grins horribly. But Roma falls in love with the man she is sworn to betray, marries him privately in Bonelli's despite, saves him from a charge of murder, and dies to leave him valiant and broken-hearted.

This brief outline does no justice to the quick invention and the poignant emotion of the book. The personages are a continual surprise to the reader; their names remain the same: David is always David, Roma is never anything but Roma. Yet they are seldom the same, for they change their views and their characters at a moment's notice. The churlish critic may murmur Inconsistency. But what does consistency matter, when a pleasing variety makes boredom impossible? On one page the stalwart David swears he will never look upon a woman. On the next "he had lifted her hand to his lips and was kissing it again and again." Nor is the lady far behind him. Upon page 106 Roma laughs to think "how little execution her gentleman's fusilade will make in this direction." On page 111 she has resolved to represent him in her celebrated fountain (of course she is a sculptor) as "John—the beloved disciple. That would fit him exactly.

His mind was like a palace that is less beautiful in itself than for some monument of the past that is preserved within it." What an agreeable lightness this variety imparts to a book! You might get tired of David or of Roma, but Mr Caine doesn't give you the chance. He turns his characters inside out by a wizard's touch, and you read on with a new zest, wondering what will become of them on the morrow.

Splendid as Roma appears, we confess that we prefer David. The Admirable Crichton has been going out of fashion, and here is he restored to us, finer than he was in Ouida's earliest romances. The socialist agitator goes hunting in the Campagna. Three times he rides his horse—"a high, strong-limbed sorrel, with wild eyes and panting nostrils"—at a wall. Three times the horse refused.

"The hunters had waited to watch the result"—we quote Mr Caine's words—"and as the horse came up for a fourth trial, with its wild eyes flashing, its nostrils quivering, and its forelock tossed over one ear, it was seen that the bridle had broken and Rossi was riding with one rein. 'He'll be lucky if he isn't hurt,' said some one. 'Why doesn't he give it the whip over its quarters?' said another. But David Rossi only patted his horse until it came to the spot where it had shied before. Then he reached over its neck on the side of the broken rein, and with open hand struck it sharply across the nose. The horse reared, snorted, and jumped, and at the next moment it was standing quietly on the other side of the wall."

Of course it was, and we are left thinking of our old friend Guy Livingstone. But the episode is not concluded. Said Sir

Evelyn, "You handle a horse like a man who began early." "Yes," said David Rossi, "I was a stable-boy two years in New York." A noble reply, worthy of the hero, who, when the Countess (or the Princess) asked him whether he had before been at the Grand Hotel (where, by the way, Mr Caine informs us, the women are "clothed in diamonds"—cold and comfortless), declares that he has been a waiter there. In brief, this son of a Pope is a perfect hero, and it is positively cruel of Mr Caine not to have let him live happy ever after with his raven-haired, violet-eyed, golden-tinted, reckless, faithful Roma.

But if the last page disappoints us, we get plenty of emotion for our money. The hero and heroine pass their lives in the wildest transports. His "blood beats in stabs," while her throat is continually "throbbing." Now, "the muscles in his face quiver"; now, she is overcome by "a sense of suffocation"; and nothing can be more pleasing than these transports to those whose throats never throb, and whose muscles seldom quiver. But that, of course, is the great gift of the imaginative novelist: he takes us out of ourselves, and he bids us share the fruit of his erudition. Mr Caine has studied Rome profoundly, and he has given us the results of his study amiably sweetened. Thus, when a Princess explains the structure of the Opera House to a journal-

ist, who must have been perfectly familiar with it, we overlook the absurdity, because we recognise that Mr Caine does not care to convey his instruction at first hand. Again, when a high-born Italian lady exclaims, "How funny the men look in evening dress in the morning!" we know that Mr Caine is expressing not the lady's surprise, which she could not feel, but his own; and we thank him for it. We have been told that a certain chapter of the book was suppressed by the editor of a magazine. We have sought that chapter in vain, and we must protest in the name of letters against the editor's tyranny. That Mr Caine was guilty of impropriety we refuse to believe. He touches dangerous themes with a delicacy which Mr Pecksniff himself might have envied, and his book contains no page of offence. In conclusion, we owe Mr Caine our sincere thanks for beguiling our leisure with a romance of Italy. His characters are not wholly strange,—you might meet the most of them in Bloomsbury or Bedford Park. But he has chosen such names for them as arouse the dullest curiosity. The Egyptian donkey-drivers call their beasts Mr Gladstone, Mrs Langtry, and what not, and Mr Caine has followed a pleasant example. His donkeys (if he will pardon the term) are all princes, kings, and popes, and it is only on reading his book that we discover the pleasantry.

BLACKWOOD'S EDINBURGH MAGAZINE.

No. MXXXII.

OCTOBER 1901.

VOL. CLXX.

RECENT NAVAL PROGRESS.

PROGRESS may be measured either by comparison with the national forces at some former period, or with the forces of naval nations both in the past and at the present time. The latter method is the more reasonable one, for our relative position as compared with our neighbours is of far more importance than any improvement that has taken place in our own force. Nor must it be forgotten that in naval matters we are neighbours to the whole maritime world. In matters military the main questions of relative strength are principally concerned with the Power or Powers whose frontiers march with ours, but there are no such restrictions in dealing with sea power. Every nation that maintains a force on the seas is by that fact constituted a neighbour of Great Britain.

Some distinction may, however, be drawn between those nations that maintain a force evidently intended for fighting in the open sea, and those which are content with a limited number of vessels intended mainly, if not entirely, for coast defence.

Nations which maintain sea-keeping Navies—

Great Britain.	United States.
France.	Italy.
Germany.	Japan.
Russia.	

Nations which aim mainly at defending their Coasts—

Austria.	Holland.
Chili.	Denmark.
Argentina.	Brazil.
Spain.	Greece.
Sweden.	China.

These lists cannot be dismissed without a certain amount of comment and consideration. A generation ago

there would have been marked differences in the corresponding lists. Germany and the United States would then have been relegated to the category of coast defenders, whilst Spain, and possibly Turkey, would have appeared well up the list as maintaining sea-keeping navies. Japan, which now appears in the higher list, would not have appeared at all, nor would Argentina or Brazil. Peru has disappeared in common with Turkey. Portugal might also have been considered worthy of a place at the tail of the lower list; she is now unworthy of notice. The aggregate strength of what may virtually be called the three new sea-keeping navies, those of Germany, the United States, and Japan, already approaches that of Great Britain; and though Japan has at present no battleships building, Germany and the United States are pushing forward the building of ships with the greatest energy, and it is said that Japan is about to recommence building battleships. In accordance with her approved programme, Germany in 1916 is to have 38 first-class battleships besides older armoured ships. We have at present 28 first-class and 11 second-class battleships—total 39; so that Germany aspires in fifteen years' time to at least equal our present battleship strength, and unless France follows her lead Germany will soon exceed the battleship strength of France, which now stands at

12 first-class and 14¹ second-class battleships. The United States has not decided what is to be the strength of her fleet, but she has recently passed Italy in the race, and with her immense resources could easily, if she wished, outbuild both Germany and Russia, to say nothing of France.

Russia has been so anxious to increase her fleet that during the last few years she has had ships built for her in France, Germany, the United States, and Denmark,—her own shipyards being at the same time worked to their greatest capacity, whilst they are being continually enlarged. Since 1890 the strength of the sea-going Russian fleet has been at least doubled. France has pushed on steadily with her shipbuilding during the last ten years, but there has not been the same phenomenal increase in her navy as in those of her neighbours. She has done a great deal of work in her shipyards for Russia, and some for Brazil, Greece, and Spain, so that she can readily increase her rate of building by utilising her resources for enlarging her own navy. Whether she will rest content in view of the great advance which Germany has decided upon remains to be proved: the sea-power of the Dual Alliance has greatly increased of late years, but Russia has contributed more than France.

So far as progress can be judged by expenditure, it is interesting to note that Germany,

¹ Four modern coast-defence ships are included.

the United States, and Japan, have in the last ten years trebled their naval expenditure. Russia has increased hers some 250 per cent, and France about 50 per cent. Italy alone of all the principal naval Powers has not increased her navy.

And how do we stand in view of the abnormal increase which is taking place in the navies of foreign countries? In Great Britain we depend very greatly on popular opinion, and to some extent our progress may be judged by the interest shown by the public in naval matters. Twenty-one years ago, at a period when the French were not only building more rapidly than we were, but when both our ship-designs and the patterns of our guns were very decidedly inferior to those produced abroad, the 'Times,' in commenting on the Naval Estimates, congratulated its readers on the reduction of $1\frac{1}{2}$ million which had taken place, and proceeded to enlarge on the supreme importance of economy, which the writer evidently considered of greater moment than the maintenance of a navy equal to the duties which might fall on it in the defence of the empire. And the 'Times' seems fairly to have represented public opinion in those days, so much so that economy and inefficiency went hand in hand until well into the Eighties. Moreover, the administrative and designing skill at the Admiralty had fallen so low, that in 1884 Lord Northbrook, speaking as First Lord of the Admiralty, informed the House

of Lords that if the Admiralty were granted three or four millions, their great difficulty would be to decide how to spend the money. The Ajax and Agamemnon were then our latest battleships, and the Calliope our latest type of cruiser. With their utterly inadequate speed and muzzle-loading guns, these ships had no chance whatever of dealing successfully with their possible antagonists.

Following on the popular agitation, in which the 'Pall Mall Gazette' took the lead, a special building programme was put forward in December 1884, and from that time onward the public interest in the navy has been well maintained. Thanks, too, to the genius of Sir William White, the designs of our ships improved to such an extent that for some years they held an unquestioned superiority; and if at present equally good designs are being produced abroad, many of their salient features will be found to be based on British models.

The great improvement in battleship design dates from 1889, when the Royal Sovereign and her seven sisters were projected; but the last of these ships, the Revenge, was not completed for six years—namely, in 1895—and, speaking generally, a decade will often elapse before the navy feels the full effect of some improvement in design or of some important invention.

In the evil days when Mr Gladstone, Lord Northbrook, and Sir Cooper Key were in power, the Navy Estimates

stood at about $10\frac{1}{2}$ millions, whilst this year they stand at 31 millions. Not only has our expenditure trebled, but the increment of force due to this expenditure has increased more rapidly, for there is no doubt that we are getting better value for our money now than then. We are now spending somewhat more than double on our *personnel*, which has increased from 57,000 to 118,000, whilst the expenditure on *matériel* has increased fivefold. This large expenditure on *matériel* is in measure due to the fact that we are at present making up for past deficiencies. When it was decided in 1889 to further increase the navy, and the Naval Defence Act was passed, the ships were built, but the necessary accessories were not in all cases provided. Dockyards and harbours have had to be enlarged; docks are being built; more reserve guns and ammunition have had to be bought; accommodation has had to be provided for the additional seamen and marines when not afloat; the supplies of coal and other stores have had to be greatly increased; and the ports have had to be deepened to accommodate the new types of big ships. The ships of the present day—both men-of-war and merchant ships—depend infinitely more on the ports at which they call than was the case years ago. A modern ship has to be docked about five times as frequently as the old-fashioned wooden sailing ships. The seamen of old, if provided with a good store of spars, canvas, and rope, could keep the

motive power of their ship in excellent order without outside assistance. The armament of a ship of old was of such a simple character that it never needed repair, and its replacement was a very easy matter: guns could be cast and carriages knocked up almost anywhere, and a ship could leave her port and not reappear for years without any serious loss of efficiency.

Not only has all this changed, but we have now begun to realise that we cannot have an efficient fleet at sea without providing the fullest facilities at our ports to promptly meet the multifarious needs of our ships immediately they return to harbour. Of old, Spithead or Cawsand Bay formed ideal roadsteads. Here there was ample sea-room, so that the largest three-decker could enter or leave without difficulty, stores and water could be readily shipped, and a gale could be ridden out in security. The first essential in a modern harbour is not sea-room, but a narrow entrance for security against torpedo attack; and if nature has not provided this, resort must be had to a costly breakwater, such as those in progress at Dover, Gibraltar, and Malta. Inside the harbour it is desirable to have an almost unlimited wharfage, so that ships can lie alongside in close proximity to factories and stores. We have more than trebled our wharfage in the last generation, but it is still insufficient for our growing needs. Tradition dies hard in the navy, and some of the superior virtue which was always attached to the ship at

Spithead still remains. Well clear of the shore, in a good swinging billet, ready for sea, with all hands free to devote their spare time to paint and polish, such a ship gloried over her dirty-looking neighbour still fast-bound to the wharf, and "in dockyard hands." And so it became second nature to the naval members of the Board of Admiralty to despise wharves and jetties; and the refitting of the modern ship suffered accordingly. The lack of facilities for promptly carrying out minor repairs made it necessary to lay a ship up for months, or even years, when the day of paying off came. All this is now passing away. We are gradually training our men—not only the artificers and stokers, but also the seaman class—to keep the mechanism with which they have to deal in such thorough order that fewer repairs are needed. Moreover, factory facilities are being provided at the various ports which will enable the ships' companies to do much themselves which has hitherto fallen upon the dockyard. Indeed, the day seems not far distant when the successor of the old Jack-tar with his marline-spike, knife, and pot of grease will be seen in the factory intelligently working some complicated machine-tool which is shaping out a piece of hydraulic mechanism, or being utilised for repairing a dynamo. Moreover, the handiness induced by steam, twin-screws, and dockyard tugs makes it possible to get the largest ship to sea as promptly from the well-placed wharf as from the open anchor-

age, which was necessary to give the ships of old the required sea-room for weighing under sail; so that the modern ship alongside the dockyard is in a not dissimilar position to one of her predecessors lying at Spithead and carrying out a general refit aloft.

The improvement of our dockyards is costly, and does not appeal to the man in the street as does the laying down of new ships; and an Administration which spends freely on the most necessary but little noticed accessories without which a fleet cannot be kept in a constant readiness for active service, deserves well of every thoughtful member of the community.

In connection with the agitation raised this summer with reference to the supposed weakness of our Mediterranean Fleet, an outcry was made that we have not the necessary fleet auxiliaries, and the following were stated to be necessary:—

- Hospital ships.
- Repairing ships.
- Mother ships for destroyers.
- Efficient colliers.
- Telegraph ships.

These ships are obviously not required when the fleet is close to a well-provided shore base, and when, therefore, but little time is lost in communicating with the shore which has hitherto furnished all the facilities required. Whether these vessels are urgently needed or not depends on the conditions which prevail in the next naval war. If we find

it both desirable and feasible to keep our fleet constantly at sea far from its base, such vessels would be needed. If, for example, we had such an overwhelming superiority over our possible opponents that we could count on keeping them in port, and on being able to maintain a close blockade of various ports far removed from any friendly base, as Sampson blockaded Cervera in Santiago, then it might be wise to devote a goodly proportion of the money taken in the Naval Estimates to buying auxiliary vessels, and also to enlist men for manning them. But we cannot eat our cake and have it too. If men and money be employed for auxiliary services, the fleet will necessarily be less numerous than if, as at present, no auxiliaries are provided in peace-time, and the provision of auxiliaries be left until the outbreak of war. It is indeed quite conceivable that the fleet might be so weakened by an undue proportion of our means being devoted to auxiliary service that it would have to fall back on its bases, where the auxiliaries for which so much was sacrificed would be superfluous. It is to be noted that as yet the great naval Powers have one and all shown themselves of the same mind as ourselves in refusing to spend much in peace-time on auxiliary ships. The United States found themselves in 1897 operating a long way from their bases, and these bases were also very poorly provided. There was naturally a great outcry for auxiliaries, but though there

has been much talk since of a large outlay on such vessels, it has not been found desirable to do much after all. The most formidable demand is that for "efficient colliers," by which is meant vessels of high speed and large coal capacity, which are to accompany the fleet—sixteen knots has been mentioned as a reasonable speed—and a capacity of 6000 tons of coal has been asked for, of which 1000 is required for the needs of the collier and 5000 for the fleet. Such a vessel would displace some 9000 tons, and, requiring engines of 6000 horse-power, would be most expensive to build and maintain. Coaling at sea from a vessel of this size must needs be a very slow and hazardous process, and if coaling is to be carried out in harbour the ordinary collier of commerce, holding 2000 to 3000 tons, would be decidedly preferable. Each ship of the fleet requires her own collier for rapid coaling, but the big "efficient collier" would have to go from ship to ship to get rid of her 5000 tons. At the present moment over 30 large ships, including 18 first-class battleships, are manœuvring under the Commander-in-Chief of the Mediterranean station. If 10 "efficient colliers" were to be with this fleet, and 10 others, having been emptied, were fetching fresh coal, we should have to provide 20 colliers, which would cost about as much as half-a-dozen fair-sized cruisers. Under the present system the fleet is coaled by arranging that a large number of the ordinary

colliers of commerce—9-knot ships of 2000 to 3000 tons capacity—should meet the ships requiring coal in the nearest available port,—the route from the coal depot being protected by our cruisers. Great Britain possesses a very large number of colliers which in peace-time earn their own living, and we also have a number of well-placed harbours on every station. It is almost inevitable in war that a few of the colliers would be snapped up by the enemy's cruisers which had escaped us, but their slow speed would make it difficult to carry them into port, so that they would not much benefit the enemy; and on the whole, I should much prefer to put money into fighting cruisers, which would protect both commerce and colliers, than to lavish it on "efficient colliers" with no fighting power, and, notwithstanding their expensive engines, insufficient speed to ensure their escape if chased by the ordinary cruiser.

The case for repairing ships stands on a different basis. It is not necessary to have more than one or two of these ships with each fleet. In peace-time they would largely pay their way, and would, moreover, be most useful in keeping up the mechanical training of our ships' companies. The modern seaman must be more or less a mechanic, otherwise he is wellnigh useless amongst the maze of machinery which constitutes a fighting ship. Moreover, such ships would enable the enterprising mechanic, who

wishes to see something of the world without altogether exiling himself from home, to accomplish his wishes with benefit both to himself and the public. Telegraph-ships can readily be requisitioned from the various British companies at the shortest notice; and hospital-ships can also be very quickly fitted up, provided the necessary stores are kept at the station headquarters. Torpedo craft could also be "mothered" by fast merchant-ships which would furnish them with coal, water, and stores, and afford relief to their crews as required.

Notwithstanding all statements to the contrary, there need be no hesitation in asserting that we are well supplied with accessories at our ports as compared with our neighbours, and that we ought to have less wastage of our sea-keeping force than our possible antagonists, owing to our superior facilities for equipping our ships in harbour, and owing to the readiness with which auxiliaries can be obtained from our unrivalled merchant marine.

It is curious how little attention has recently been devoted in the public prints to the manning of the navy. The British navy stands almost entirely by itself in its principle of providing *personnel*. Briefly, the British navy depends entirely on men enlisted for long service, whilst all other navies consist mainly of short-service men, stiffened by a relatively small number of men enlisted and trained as lads, and who

serve until finally pensioned. Hence it results that we employ in peace-time far more men than do our neighbours.

*Officers and Men employed in
Peace-time.*

Great Britain . .	118,000
France	49,000
Russia	48,000
Germany	29,000
United States . .	28,000
Italy	25,000
Japan	21,000

using conscription, get their men far cheaper, so that the cost per head is roughly as under:—

France	£70
Germany	60
Russia	50
Italy	50

The United States pays far more liberally, so that the cost per man employed in peacetimes rises to £115.

We have therefore in peacetime only 8000 men less than France, Russia, and Germany taken together. But when it comes to calling out the Reserves, we can barely muster 30,000, whilst France has at least 50,000, and both Russia and Germany will shortly outnumber us in the number of men kept in reserve.

The advantage of continuous service is that training is continuous. Seeing that our seamen serve from the age of eighteen to thirty-eight they ought to be better trained than the foreign seaman, whose training is more intermittent. At the beginning of a war we should therefore hold a considerable advantage as compared with our rivals. The long-service system is naturally expensive; the British seaman is paid from the time he enters the navy till the day of his death, for all the long-service men earn pensions. Thus the country expends on its *personnel*, including pensions and all other charges, about £100 per head for every officer and man actually serving in peacetime. The Continental Powers,

The cost of our Reserve per head is not one-tenth that of the long-service men, whilst on the Continent compulsory service renders the cost of their large reserves very low indeed. With voluntary service the only method of reducing the enormous peace expenses entailed by long service is to limit the number of long-service men and to reintroduce short service in the navy for a proportion of the complements of our ships. It must not be forgotten that all our great naval victories were won by ships' companies which included a considerable proportion of what were practically short-service men, who had served for a commission or so and then left the navy for some other employment, returning again 'on the outbreak of war. Our Coastguards are seven to ten years afloat and then go ashore, and their efficiency when re embarked is undoubted. Short service seems bound to come when economy is once more prominently to the fore.

Our Reserves are at present drawn from the mercantile marine and from the fisheries. The

men hitherto have done only one month's training each year, and this generally in harbour-ships. Recent regulations entail a longer course of training, but the men do not appear to appreciate them, and a diminished entry seems certain, even though the period of six months' service in a seagoing ship which was introduced a year or two ago has been reduced to three months. A new reserve is being formed from the small number of long-service men who elect to leave after twelve years, and from men who have been pensioned after twenty years, but it will at best be but a very small force. On the whole, our Reserve is not only numerically small, but its members have much less training than the foreign reserveman. Lord Selborne recently announced that it was under contemplation to start a naval volunteer force. The idea seems an excellent one. The Cape war has shown that numbers of intelligent, and comparatively well-educated, men are ready to come forward for their country's service on an emergency. Such men, with a certain amount of preliminary training, would prove very valuable, especially if possessed of some mechanical knowledge. These men would speedily find their sea-legs,—much nonsense has been talked about sea-sickness, which, after all, has never affected the landsmen who go to sea as newspaper correspondents,—and would be decidedly superior to the somewhat ignorant and

frequently thick-headed Royal Naval Reserve fisherman from the western shores of Ireland, or even from Scotland. In even the most recent ships, each of which seems to contain more mechanism than her predecessor, there is a good deal of work that does not entail a very lengthened training. The handling of ammunition in action is quite a simple matter, and it requires no more intelligence to carry the lyddite shell to the hoist than it did to pass up the old-fashioned round-shot. In the engine-room, too, there are many jobs that can be entrusted to men of good capacity but not much training; and even at the guns themselves the higher "numbers" could be replaced at a pinch by men of average intelligence, with such a moderate knowledge of drill as a volunteer could easily pick up.

Owing to the extremely rapid progress made in the last decade in the designing and construction of the average man-of-war, it has come to pass that ships which are still as good as, or better than, they were when new, are very markedly inferior to newer ships of the same class. A well-built steel ship should remain thoroughly seaworthy for forty or fifty years, yet the Germans have decided to replace every battleship at the age of twenty-five years and every cruiser at the age of twenty. The *Camperdown*, the last of the Admiral class of battleship, was completed only twelve years ago. She was then one of the most powerful

ships in the world. She could fire in five minutes from her broadside seven heavy projectiles, capable of piercing the thickest armour then carried, and shells from smaller guns with an aggregate weight of 3500 lb. The corresponding figures for the *Formidable*, just completed, are thirty heavy projectiles and 16,000 lb. of smaller shells. The *Camperdown* has had her slow-firing 6-inch guns converted into quick-firers, which brings up the weight of metal thrown by her lighter guns to 7000 lb. in five minutes. But even so the fire of three *Camperdowns* at the opening of an action would be no more than equal to that of one *Formidable*. The comparison does not end here; for directly hits began to be made it would become apparent that the *Camperdown* could neither pierce the *Formidable's* thick armour with her heavy projectiles nor silence the latter's well-protected 6-inch quick-firers with her lighter guns, whilst the *Formidable's* heavy shot would pierce her opponent's armour anywhere, and her lighter guns would cut to pieces the men at the corresponding guns in the *Camperdown*, which are quite unprotected. Thus, after a few minutes' firing, so many of the *Camperdown's* guns would be silenced that four ships of her type would then be required to match a single *Formidable*, and it is extremely doubtful if even five Admirals could beat off the *Formidable's* attack. Nothing has been said of speed in this comparison, but the *Formidable*

is a full 2 knots faster, therefore she can always bring an unwilling opponent to battle and escape herself from a combination that was too strong for her. Great tactical skill is also required to bring to bear the guns of a large number of ships on a smaller number of vessels individually superior. It will almost inevitably happen that some of the more numerous ships are thrown out of action or interfere with their friends. Something of this kind occurred to the B Fleet under Admiral Noel when engaging the X Fleet of fewer but greatly superior ships commanded by Admiral Wilson in the recent manœuvres, when the more modern fleet had an overwhelming tactical advantage over its more numerous opponents—so much so, that if the encounter had been a real one very few of the B's should have reached their ports. If we were to adhere to such a rule as that propounded above of keeping battleships for twenty-five years, we should for many years to come be saddled with such ships as the "Admirals," which have not one-fourth of the fighting value of an up-to-date battleship.

The two principal causes of the phenomenally rapid deterioration of our older battleships, as compared with their modern rivals, are the recent remarkable improvements in armour and guns. Armour has doubled its resisting power since the *Camperdown* was built, and the rate of fire of ships' guns has increased four-

fold, whilst their penetrating power has also gone up considerably. It might be possible to give the Camperdown new guns, gun mountings, and machinery for working them, at great expense, but it would be more difficult still to change her armour. The operation of changing the armour has been much talked of abroad, but only patches here and there have really been removed and replaced. Even then the reconstructed ship would be so slow that she could not keep pace with her modern sisters, or bring to battle an unwilling enemy, and the Admiralty are perfectly justified in resisting the clamour for rearming our old battleships. The case of the older cruisers, which are nearly all unarmoured, is not so bad as that of the out-of-date battleships. Their guns can be changed without much difficulty; the ships, being merely protected by deck-armour, are not much inferior to their modern protected rivals, because the improvement of deck-armour has not been great; and where speed is lacking, a cruiser can still be utilised for some detached service where she does not retard others, and can still do some useful work. The difficulty which confronts us at present with regard to our old cruisers is that for the last three or four years nearly all the cruisers built abroad have been of the new type of armoured cruisers. This craft is so greatly superior to the old-fashioned deck-protected first- or second-class cruiser that

the latter, even in greatly superior numbers, could scarcely deal with her at all. She is quite as invulnerable as the battleship to the cruiser's guns, and has more speed than her weaker prototypes. We have some seventy-three serviceable first- and second-class cruisers of the old type and forty-four of the third-class. If the armoured cruiser, as some think, is to play havoc with these craft with the same ease and immunity as the *Merimac* destroyed and dispersed the unarmoured frigates and corvettes off Hampton Roads in 1863, what are we to do for commerce protectors and scouts for our fleets? Already we have armoured cruisers on the stocks which cost more to build, and considerably more to maintain, than most of our battleships, and it is hopeless to think of building a sufficiency of such terribly expensive craft for scouting and commerce protection where numbers are essential. The Russians, who have often shown remarkable foresight in questions of naval development, are bringing out a novel type of second-class cruiser with enormously powerful engines, in order that she may be able to escape from the armoured cruiser. This may be the solution of the problem; if so, it entails the complete reconstitution and reconstruction of the whole of our force of medium-sized cruisers.

We are somewhat behind our rivals in the provision of armoured cruisers. We have ten hybrids—viz., the two

Terribles and eight Diadems—with armoured guns and unarmoured water-line, but they could not stand up against the genuine article, such as the Russian Gromoboi or French Condé. However, with some twenty-two of these ships building, we are making up lost ground, and in another year or two will be in a fairly good position for keeping in check the armoured cruisers of our possible opponents.

So much is commonly said

about battleships, that it is scarcely realised that our cruisers and torpedo craft cost us more than do the battleships. This is owing to the fact that the aggregate crews of our cruisers and smaller craft greatly outnumber the crews of our battleships, as the following table shows; and even on a battleship the payment of the crew costs nearly as much as the upkeep and replacement (when worn out) of the ship.

Crews required for British Ships, close of 1901.

Battleships.		Cruisers.		Torpedo craft.	
28 first-class . . .	21,000	4 armoured . . .	3,000	1 torpedo depot . .	500
11 second-class . . .	7,000	10 partially armoured		34 torpedo gunboats .	4,000
10 third-class . . .	5,500	(Terrible, &c.) . .	7,000	110 destroyers . . .	5,000
6 harbour-defence ships	2,500	13 first-class . . .	7,000	80 torpedo boats . .	1,500
		60 second-class . .	23,000		
		44 third-class . . .	9,000		
55	36,000	131	49,000	225	11,000

Out of the 118,000 long-service men and some 30,000 reserves we have only room in our battleships for 36,000 men. Battleships cannot be improvised on an emergency, but something might be done in the way of improvising cruisers and smaller craft; so that it seems that if we went to war at this moment only about one-third of our long-service men would be in battleships, whilst the remaining two-thirds and all the reserves would be in cruisers and smaller craft. The 36,000 men forming the battleships' crews cost about $3\frac{1}{2}$ millions per annum. In the last ten years we have built thirty battleships at the cost of somewhat less than 30 millions: thus some 3 millions per annum have been spent in keeping up our supply of

battleships, and another $1\frac{1}{2}$ million in repairs, coal, and other stores for the battle-fleet. This gives 8 millions per annum as the cost of our battleships, or only about one-third of the total sum expended on the navy for the last ten years.

If we were to continue building battleships at the rate of three per annum, we should take just over eighteen years to build fifty-five ships; and if the strength of the battle-fleet be kept at this figure, the ships when just over eighteen years old would be replaced by new ones. But our present list includes eleven ships twenty-five years old or older, and five others more than eighteen years old. The fighting value of these ships, which are catalogued above as third-class battleships and harbour-de-

fence ships, is almost infinitesimal. It was shown that four ships of the Admiral class, which form the bulk of the second-class battleships, are barely worth one new battleship; and the sixteen older ships would probably get the worst of it if they engaged half their number of second-class ships, whilst their speed is so low that it is hopeless to expect that they could ever get into action with a weaker enemy who wished to evade them.

But we are maintaining crews for all these inferior ships at great expense, we are keeping them in repair, which also costs money, and we have no less than five of the ships over eighteen years old actually in commission, which cost little less to maintain than efficient fighting ships, and which, presumably, on the outbreak of war are expected to uphold the honour of the flag. The inevitable conclusion is, that we should strain every nerve to replace these wellnigh useless battleships; and though this would undoubtedly be costly, it would be less costly than what we are doing now. In order to get the fighting power of one modern battleship we have to pay the crews of at least four of our obsolescent second-class ships, we have to keep four ships in repair in lieu of one, we have to provide a fourfold supply of stores. The money now lavished on the extra men and stores would much more than suffice to pay interest on a loan for building new ships. Our foreign rivals,

faced by the same problem, have found that their ship-yards are already so fully employed that to replace their obsolescent ships is impossible. Fortunately for them, too, the task of re-arming their old ships and improving their speed is not so difficult as with our designs, so that across the Channel the second-class battleships are being furnished with new armaments and boilers which will make them fairly efficient, and will render them greatly superior to our ships of the same age.

In Great Britain we have the most unrivalled facilities for shipbuilding. We have great ship-yards that have never yet turned their attention to the building of armoured ships, but which would be ready enough to undertake the work if it was made worth their while. Even if we had to pay somewhat higher than we have been accustomed to do, it would be far better than maintaining a considerable number of out-of-date ships.

Moreover, the moral effect of giving our men newer and better ships than their opponents must not be forgotten. Nothing is more demoralising than the feeling that owing to inferiority in armament it is hopeless to expect victory; that if an attack is sustained without suffering an utter overthrow, there will be much cause for thankfulness. But with new ships the officers and men of our Home Fleet would go to sea with the confidence that they had only to make the best

use of their weapons to sweep from the seas any fleet opposed to them which had not an overwhelming numerical superiority.

It has been assumed, in assessing the fighting value of the armoured ships, whether battleships or cruisers, now building in this and other countries, that the gun is the principal weapon. The torpedo has been with us many years, and though special craft are provided for its use in every navy, which absorb large numbers of men and cost much money, and though on all hands it is admitted that it is a weapon that must be reckoned with still, there is at present a general agreement that it ranks much below the gun. Fear of the gun has now driven the torpedo under water. In big ships none but submerged torpedoes are fitted, and the torpedo-boat is being supplemented, if not superseded, by the submarine. The use of the torpedo in big ships is hampered by the fact that it is almost impossible to use a ship's torpedoes against another ship without laying the assailant open to a similar attack. Two battleships engaging with torpedoes are not unlikely to resemble a pair of Kilkenny cats. So the torpedo craft is essentially a small vessel whose loss could be faced with equanimity. The French have always devoted much attention to torpedo craft, and it is principally in France that the submarine torpedo-boat is being developed. Its supporters hope that this craft

will prove greatly superior to the ordinary torpedo-boat. If a vessel could be built which had the high surface speed which is considered absolutely essential for the ordinary torpedo-boat, and which could dive at will, much would have been accomplished; but the submarine is of necessity very slow—far slower than any ship which she might wish to attack. Moreover, the diving or submerging process takes time, so that a boat when chased by a destroyer would be liable to be overtaken before she could get under water. Once under water nothing can be seen from the submarine. It was hoped that an optic tube with its end above water would enable the boat to travel a short distance beneath the surface and yet be guided by sight. But hitherto the optic tubes have proved very unreliable. Under water the boat is slower than on the surface. From all this it results that an attack on a ship under way is a most difficult proceeding, if not altogether hopeless. Owing to the slow speed of the boat, her only chance is that the ship may steer towards her and she may then get a shot as the ship goes past. But she must continually come to the surface to see where the ship is, and might be discovered, when the ship would turn away. If she dives and fires when she has been down some time, a miss is almost certain, because she lost sight of the ship on diving, and does not know where she has gone since. Her best chance would be to remain on the

surface, showing her conning-tower only, and, trusting to her invisibility, to get off her torpedo before she was sighted.

In attacking a stationary ship there is a fair prospect of success: the boat can take the bearing of her opponent, can dive and steer in the direction indicated by the bearing, firing her torpedo when the time tells her that she ought to be within range. But a stationary ship, especially if in an open harbour, already runs much risk at night if her position is known to the enemy; hence the trouble that has been taken to make harbours proof at night against torpedo-boats by breakwaters and booms. The submarine will entail the taking of similar precautions during daylight. If the submarine could break her way into a harbour notwithstanding boom obstructions, she would indeed have proved her usefulness, but this she has yet to do.

All that can be said at present is that the submarine makes it more dangerous than ever to remain stationary near an enemy's base, and the Admiralty are doubtless wise in purchasing six of these boats

in order to ascertain by trial their powers and limitations.

On the whole, thanks mainly to the efforts of the last ten years, we hold a good position. We have a numerous *personnel* whose training is being most carefully attended to. As yet our battle-fleet is fully equal to meeting the combined fleets of the next two Powers, and if our unrivalled building facilities are utilised for replacing our older battleships, we can more than hold that position.

Although somewhat late in starting to build armoured cruisers, we are making good headway, and shall before long out-distance our rivals, who are hurrying on ships of this type. If a new type of smaller cruisers becomes necessary, we can build faster than any other Power: in the meantime we have a good supply of scouts and commerce protectors. Our torpedo flotilla is efficient, and if it is found that submarine torpedo-boats are necessary, we are making experiments which should put us in the position of deciding what kind of boat is needed.

ACTIVE LIST.

THE WESTCOTES.

BY A. T. QUILLER COUCH.

CHAPTER I.—THE WESTCOTES OF BAYFIELD.

A MURAL tablet in Axcester Parish Church describes Endymion Westcote as "a conspicuous example of that noblest work of God, the English country gentleman." Certainly he was a typical one.

In almost every district of England you will find a family which, without distinguishing itself in any particular way, has held fast to the comforts of life and the respect of its neighbours for generation after generation. Its men have never shone in court, camp, or senate: they prefer tenacity to enterprise, look askance upon wit (as a dangerous gift), and are even a little suspicious of eminence. On the other hand, they make excellent magistrates, maintain a code of manners most salutary for the poor in whose midst they live, and are looked up to; are as a rule satisfied—like the old Athenian—if they leave to their heirs not less but a little more than they themselves inherited; and deserve, as they claim, to be called the backbone of Great Britain. Many of the women have beauty, still more have an elegance which may pass for it, and almost all are pure in thought, truthful, assiduous in deeds of charity, and marry for love of those manly qualities which they

have already esteemed in their brothers.

Such a party were the Westcotes of Bayfield, or Bagvil, in 1810. Their "founder" had settled in Axcester as a lawyer, towards the middle of the seventeenth century, and prospered—mainly, it was said, by usury. A little before his death, which befell in 1668, he purchased Bayfield House from a decayed Royalist who had lost his only son in the Civil Wars; and to Bayfield and the ancestral business (omitting the usury) his descendants continued faithful. One or both of the two brothers who, with their half-sister, represented the family in 1810, rode in on every weekday to their office in Axcester High Street,—a Georgian house faced with brick, adorned with a porch of plaster fluted to the shape of a sea-shell, out of which a Cupid smiled down upon a brass plate and the inscription WESTCOTE & WESTCOTE, and on the first floor with windows as tall as the rooms, so that from the street you could see through one the shapely legs of Mr Endymion Westcote at his knee-hole table, and through another the legs of Mr Narcissus. The third and midmost window was a dummy, having been bricked up to avoid the window-tax

imposed by Mr Pitt—in whose statesmanship, however, the brothers had firmly believed. Their somewhat fantastic names were traditional in the Westcote pedigree, and dated from the seventeenth century.

Endymion, the elder (who took the lead of Narcissus in all things), was the fine flower of the Westcote stock, and, out of question, the most influential man in Axcester and for many a mile around. Justice of the Peace for the County of Somerset and Major of its Yeomanry, he served "Our town" (so he called it) as Guardian of the Poor, Governor of the Grammar School, Chairman of Feoffees, Churchwarden, — everything, in short, but Mayor, an office which he left to the tradesmen, while taking care to speak of it always with respect, and indeed to see it properly filled. The part of county magistrate—to which he had been born—he played to perfection; with a full sense of its dignified amenity, yet conscientiously, and with a knack of taking a stand at the right moment, and, having taken it, of showing himself independent, and even masterful. (It was whispered that the Lord Lieutenant himself stood in some awe of him.) His favourite character, however, was that of plain citizen of his native town. "I'm an Axcester man," he would declare in his public speeches, and in his own way he loved and served the little borough. For its good he held its parliamentary representation in the hollow of his hand; and,

as overseer of the poor, had dared public displeasure by revising the voters' list and defying a mandamus of the Court of King's Bench, rather than allow Axcester to fail in its duty of returning two members to support Mr Perceval's ministry. In 1800, when the price of wheat rose to 184s. a quarter, a poor woman dropped dead in the market-place, of starvation. At once a mob collected, hoisted a quartern loaf on a pole, with the label "We will have Bread or Blood!" and started to pillage the shops in High Street. It was Endymion Westcote who rode up single-handed (they were carrying the only constable on their shoulders), and faced and dispersed the rioters. It was he who headed the subscription list, prevailed on the vestry to purchase a waggon-load of potatoes, and persuaded the people to plant them,—for even the seed-potatoes had been eaten, and the gardens lay uncropped and undigged. It was he who met the immediate famine by importing large quantities of rice. Finally, it was he, through his influence with the county, who brought back prosperity by getting the French prisoners sent to Axcester.

We shall talk of these French prisoners by-and-by. To conclude this portrait of Endymion Westcote: He was a handsome, fresh-complexioned man, over six feet in height, and past his forty-fifth year; a bachelor and a Protestant. In his youth he had been noted for gallantry, and preserved some traces of it

in his address. His grandfather had married a French lady, and although this union had not sensibly diluted the Westcote blood, Endymion would refer to it to palliate a youthful taste for playing the fiddle. He spoke French fluently with a British accent, which, when appointed Commissary, he took pains to improve by conversation with the prisoners, and was fond of discussing heredity with the two most distinguished of them—the Vicomte de Tocqueville and General Rochambeau.

Narcissus, the younger brother, had not the stature nor the good looks nor the masterful carriage of Endymion, and made no pretence to rival him as a man of affairs. He professed to be known as the student of the family, dabbled in archæology, and managed two or three local societies and field clubs, which met ostensibly to listen to his papers, but really to picnic. An accident had determined this bent of his—the discovery, during some repairs, of a fine Roman pavement beneath the floor of Bayfield House. At the age of eighteen, during a Cambridge vacation, Narcissus had written and privately printed a description of this pavement, proving not only that its *tessellæ* represented scenes in the mythological story of Bacchus, but that the name “Bayfield,” in some old deeds and documents written “Bagvil” or “Baggevil,” was neither more nor less than a corruption of *Bacchi Villa*. Axcester and its neighbourhood are rich in

Roman remains—the town stands indeed on the old Fosse Way; and, tempted by early success, Narcissus rode his hobby farther and farther afield. Now, at the age of forty-two, he could claim to be an authority on the Roman Occupation of Britain, and especially on the conquests of Vespasian.

The circle of the Westcotes' acquaintance gathered in the fine hall of Bayfield—or, as Narcissus preferred to call it, the *atrium*—drank tea, admired the pavement, listened to the alleged exploits of Vespasian, and wondered when the brothers would marry. Time went on, repeating these assemblies, and the question became, Will they ever marry? Apparently they had no thought of it, no idea that it was expected of them: and since they had both passed forty, the question might be taken as answered. But that so personable a man as Endymion Westcote would let the family perish was monstrous to suppose. He kept his good looks and his fresh complexion; even now some maiden would easily be found to answer his Olympian nod; and a vein of recklessness sometimes cropped up through his habitual caution, and kept his friends alert for surprises. In the hunting-field, for instance,—and he rode to hounds twice a-week,—he made a rule of avoiding fences; but the world quite rightly set this down to a proper care for his person rather than to timidity, since on one famous occasion, riding up to find the whole field hesitating before a “rasper”

(they were hunting a strange country that day), he put his horse at it, and sailed over with a nonchalance only saved from offensiveness by his ringing laugh on the farther side. It was odds he would clear the fence of matrimony, some day, with a like casual heartiness; and, in any case, he was masterful enough to insist on Narcissus marrying, should it occur to him to wish it.

Oddly enough the gossips, who still arranged marriages for the brothers, had given over speculating upon their hostess, Miss Dorothea. She could not, of course, perpetuate the name; but this by no means accounted for all the difference in their concern. Dorothea Westcote was now thirty-seven, or five years younger than Narcissus, whose mother had died soon after his birth. The widower had created one of the few scandals in the Westcote history by espousing, some four years later, a young woman of quite inferior class, the daughter of a wholesale glover in Axcester. The new wife had good looks, but they did not procure her pardon; and she made the amplest and speediest amends by dying within twelve months, and leaving a daughter who in no way resembled her. The husband survived her just a dozen years.

Dorothea, the daughter, was a plain girl; and her brothers, though kind and fond of her after a fashion, did not teach her to forget it. She loved them, but her love—towards Endymion especially—partook

of awe: they were so much cleverer, as well as handsomer, than she. Having no mother or friend of her own sex to imitate, she grew into an awkward woman, sensitive to charm in others, and responding to it without jealousy, but ignorant of what it meant or how it could be acquired. She picked up some French from her brother Endymion, and masters were hired who taught her to dance, to paint in water-colours, and to play with moderate skill upon the harp. But few partners had ever sought her in the ballroom; her only drawings which any one ever asked to see were half-a-dozen of the Bayfield pavement executed for Narcissus' monograph; and her harp she played in her own room. Now and then Endymion would inquire how she progressed with her playing, would listen to her report, and observe, "Ah, I used to do a little fiddling myself." But he never put her proficiency to the test.

Somehow, and long before the world came to the same conclusion, she had resolved that marriage was not for her. She adored babies, though they usually screamed at the sight of her, and she thought it would be delightful to have one of her own who would not scream; but apart from this vague sentiment she accepted her fate without sensible regret. By watching and copying the mistresses of the few houses she visited, she learned to play the hostess at Bayfield, and, as

time brought confidence, played it with credit. She knew that people laughed at her, and that yet they liked her: their liking and their laughter puzzled her about equally. For the rest, she was proud of Bayfield, and content, though one day much resembled another, to live all her days there, devoted to God and her garden. Visitors always praised her garden.

Axcester lies on the western side, and mostly at the foot, of a low hill set accurately in the centre of a ring of hills slightly higher—the raised bottom of a saucer would be no bad simile. The old Roman road cuts straight across this rise, descends between the shops of the High Street, passes the church, crosses the Axe by a narrow bridge, and, climbing again, passes the iron gates of Bayfield House, a mile above the river. So straight is it that Dorothea could keep her brothers in sight from the gates until they dismounted before their office door, losing sight of them for a minute or two only among the elms by the bridge. Her boudoir window commanded the same prospect; and every day as the London coach topped the hill her maid Polly would run with news of it. The two would be watching often before the guard's horn awoke the street and fetched the ostler out in a hurry from the Dogs' Inn stables with their relay of four horses. Miss Dorothea possessed a telescope too, and if the coach were dressed with laurels and flags, announcing a

victory, mistress and maid would run out to the gates, with their handkerchiefs in readiness to wave as it passed. Sometimes, too, Polly would announce a post-chaise, and the telescope decide whether the postboys wore the blue or the buff. Nor were these their only causes of excitement: for the great Bayfield elm, a rood below the gates and in full view of them, marked the westward boundary of the French prisoners on parole. Some of these were quite regular in their walks; for instance, Rear-Admiral de Wailly-Duchemin and General Rochambeau, who came at three o'clock, or thereabouts, on Wednesdays and Saturdays, summer and winter. At six paces on the far side of the elm—such was their punctilio—they halted, took snuff, linked arms again, and turned back. (Dorothea had entertained them both at Bayfield, and met them at dinner in one or two neighbouring houses.) On the same days, and on Mondays as well, old Jean Pierre Pichou, ex-boatswain of the *Didon* frigate, would come along arm-in-arm with Julien Carales, *alias* Frap d'Abord, ex-*maréchal des logis*—Pichou with his wooden leg, and Frap d'Abord twisting a grey moustache and uttering a steady torrent of imprecation—or so it sounded. These could be counted on; but scores of others stopped and turned at the Bayfield elm, and Polly had names for them all. Moreover, on one memorable day Dorothea had watched one who did not halt precisely at

the elm. A few paces beyond it, and on the side of the road facing the grounds, straggled an old orchard, out of which her brother Endymion had been missing of late a quantity of his favourite pippins—by name (but it may have been a local one) Somerset Warriors. The month was October, the time about half-past four, the light dusky. Yet Miss Dorothea, lingering by the gate, saw a young man pass the Bayfield elm and climb the hedge; and saw and heard him nail, against an apple-tree overhanging the road, a board with white letters on a black ground. When it

was fixed the artist descended to the road and gazed up admiringly at his work. In the act of departing he turned, and suddenly stood still again. His face was toward the Bayfield gate. Dorothea could not tell if he saw her; but he remained thus, motionless, for almost a minute. Then he seemed to recollect himself, and marched off briskly down the road. Early next morning she descended and read the inscription, which ran, "*Restaurant pour les Aspirants.*"

She said nothing about it, and soon after breakfast the board was removed.

CHAPTER II.—THE ORANGE ROOM.

Some weeks later, on a bright and frosty morning in December, Dorothea rode into Axcester with her brothers. She was a good horsewoman, and showed to advantage on horseback, when her slight figure took a grace of movement which made amends for her face. To-day the brisk air and a canter across the bridge at the foot of the hill had brought roses to her cheeks, and she looked almost pretty. General Rochambeau happened to pass down the street as the three drew rein before the town-house (so the Westcotes always called it), and pausing to help her dismount, paid her a very handsome compliment.

Dorothea knew, of course, that Frenchmen were lavish of compliments, and had heard General Rochambeau pay them where

she felt sure they were not deserved. Nevertheless she found this one pleasant—she who had received so few—and laughed happily. It may have come from the freshness of the morning, but to-day her spirit sat light within her, and expectant: she could not say of what, yet it seemed that something good was going to happen.

"I have a guess," said the old General, "that Miss Westcote and I are bound on the same errand. It cannot be to inspect her brothers' dusty leases and deeds of mortgage and conveyance." He jerked his head towards the house, and Dorothea shook hers.

"I am going to the Dogs', General."

"Eh?" He scented the jest and chuckled. "As you say, to the dogs—hein? Messieurs,

I beg you to observe and take warning that your sister and I are going to the dogs together." He offered his arm to Dorothea. Her brothers had dismounted and handed their horses over to the ostler, who waited by the porch daily to lead them to the inn stables.

"I will stable Mercury myself," said she, addressing Eudymion. She submitted her smallest plans to him for approval.

"Do so," he answered. "After running through my letters, I will step down to the Orange Room and join you. I intrust her to you, General—the more confidently, because you cannot take her far."

He laughed, and followed Narcissus through the porch. Dorothea saw the old General wince. She slipped an arm through Mercury's bridle-rein and picked up her skirt; the other arm she laid in her companion's.

"You have not seen the Orange Room, Miss Dorothea?"

"Not since the decorations began." She paused and uttered the thought uppermost in her mind. "You must forgive my brother: I am sorry he spoke as he did just now."

"Then I am more than forgiven."

"He did not consider."

"Dear mademoiselle, your brother is an excellent fellow, and not a bit more popular than he deserves to be. Of his kindness to us prisoners—I speak not of us privileged ones but of our poorer brothers—I could name a thousand

acts; and acts say more than words."

Dorothea pursed her lips. "I am not sure. I think a woman would ask for words too."

"Yes, that is so," he caught her up; "but don't you see that we prisoners are—forgive me—just like women? I mean we have learned that we are weak. For a man that is no easy lesson, mademoiselle. I myself learned it hardly. And, seeing your brother admired by all, so strong and prosperous and confident, can I ask that he should feel as we, who have forfeited these things?"

Before she could find a reply he had harked back to the Orange Room.

"You have not seen it since the decorations began? Then I have a mind to run and ask your brother to forbid your coming—to command you to wait until Wednesday. We are in a horrible mess, I warn you, and smell of turpentine most potently. But we shall be ready for the ball, and then! It will be prodigious. You do not know that we have a genius at work on the painting?"

"My brother tells me the designs are extraordinarily clever."

"They are more than clever, you will allow. The artist I discovered myself—a young man named Charles Raoul. He comes from the South, a little below Avignon, and of good family—in some respects." The General paused and took snuff. "He enlisted at eighteen, and has seen ser-

vice: he tells me he was wounded at Austerlitz. Unhappily he was shipped, about two years ago, on board the *Thétis* frigate, with a detachment and stores for Martinique; the *Thétis* had scarcely left L'Orient before she fell in with one of your frigates, whose name escapes me—and here he is in Axcester. He has rich relatives, but for some reason or other they decline to support him; and yet he seems a gentleman. He picks up a few shillings by painting portraits; but you English are shy of sitting—I wonder why? And we—well, I suppose we prefer to wait till our faces grow happier.”

Dorothea had it on the tip of her tongue to ask how the General had discovered this genius, but the ring in his voice gave her pause. Twice in the course of their short walk he had shown feeling; and she wondered at it, having hitherto regarded him as a cynical old fellow, with a wit which cracked himself and the world like two dry nuts for the jest of their shrivelled kernels. She did not know that a kind word of hers had unlocked his heart, and before she could recall her question they had reached the stable-yard of the Dogs'. And after stabling Mercury it was but a step across to the inn.

The Dogs' Inn took its name from two stone greyhounds beside its porch—supporters of the arms of that old family from which the Westcotes had purchased Bayfield; and the Orange

Room from a tradition that William of Orange had spent a night there on his march from Torbay. There may have been truth in the tradition; the room at any rate preserved it in window-hangings of orange-yellow and a deep fringe of the same hue festooning the musicians' gallery. While serving Axcester for ball, rout, and general assembly-room, it had been admittedly dismal—its slate-coloured walls scarred and patched with new plaster, and relieved only by a gigantic painting of the royal arms on panel in a blackened frame, its ceiling garnished with four pendants in plaster, like bride-cake ornaments inverted.

To-day, as she stepped across the threshold, Dorothea hesitated between stopping her ears and rubbing her eyes. The place was a babel. Frenchmen in white paper caps and stained linen blouses were laughing, plying their brushes, mixing paints, shifting ladders, pausing to fling a jest or a criticism at one another, jabbering all the while at the pitch of their voices. For a moment the din bewildered her; the ferment had no more meaning, no more method, than a schoolboy's game. But her eyes, passing over the chaos of paint-pots, brushes, trestles, and step-ladders, told her that the place had been transformed. The ceiling between the four pendants had become a blue heaven, with filmy clouds, and Cupids scattering roses before a train of doves and a recumbent goddess, whom a little Italian, perched on a scaffolding, and

whistling shrilly, was varnishing for dear life. Around the walls—sky-blue also—trellises of vines and pink roses clambered around the old panels. The energy of the workmen had passed into their paintings—or perhaps Dorothea's head swam. At any rate, the Cupids and doves seemed to be whirling across the ceiling, the vines and roses mounting towards it, and pushing out shoots and tendrils while they climbed.

But the panels themselves! They were nine in all,—three down the long blank wall, two narrower ones at the far end, four between the orange-curtained windows looking on the street. (The fourth wall had no panel, being covered by the musicians' gallery and the pillars supporting it.) In each, framed by the vines and roses, glowed a scene of classical, or pseudo-classical, splendour: golden sunsets, pale yellow skies, landscapes cleverly imitated from recollections of Claude Lorraine, dotted with temples and small figures in flowing drapery, with here and there a glimpse of naked limbs. Here were Bacchus and Ariadne, with a company of dancing revellers; Apollo and Marsyas; the rape of Helen; Dido welcoming Æneas. . . . Dorothea (albeit she had often glanced into the copy of M. Lemprière's 'Classical Dictionary' in her brother's library, and, besides, had picked up something of Greek and Roman mythology in helping Narcissus) did not at once discriminate the subjects of these panels; but her eyes rested on

them with a pleasant sense of recognition, and were still resting on them when she heard General Rochambeau say—

"Ah, there is my genius! You must let me present him, mademoiselle. He will amuse you. Hi, there—Raoul!"

A young man, standing amid a group of workmen and criticising one of the panels between the orange curtains, turned sharply at this address. Almost before Dorothea was aware, he had doffed his paper cap and the General was introducing him.

She recognised him at once. He was the young prisoner who had nailed the board against her brother's apple-tree.

He bowed, and began at once to apologise for the state of the room. He had expected no visitors before Wednesday. The General had played a surprise upon him. And Miss Westcote—alas!—was a critic, especially of classical subjects. He had heard of her drawings for her brother's book.

Dorothea blushed. "Indeed I am no artist. Please do not talk of those drawings. If you only knew how much I am ashamed of them! And, besides, they were meant as diagrams to help the reader, not as illustrations. But these are beautiful."

He turned with a pleasant laugh. She had already taken note of his voice, but his laugh was even more musical. "Daphne pursued by Apollo," he commenced, waving his hand towards the panel in face of her. "Be pleased to observe

the lady sinking into the bush—an effect which the ingenious painter has stolen from no less a masterpiece than the ‘Buisson Ardent’ of Nicolas Froment.”

The General fumbled for the ribbon of his gold eyeglass. M. Raoul moved towards the next panel, and Dorothea followed him.

“Perseus entering the Garden of the Hesperides.”

The painting, though slapdash, was astonishingly clever, and in this, as in the other panels, no trace of the artist’s hurry appeared in the reposeful design. Coiled about the foot of the tree, the dragon Ladon blinked an eye lazily at three maidens pacing hand in hand in the dance, overhung with dark boughs and golden fruit. Behind them Perseus, with naked sword, halted in admiration, half-issuing from a thicket over which stretched a distant bright line of sea and white cliffs.

“You like it?” he asked. “But it is not quite finished yet; and mademoiselle, if she is frank, will say that it wants something.”

His voice held a challenge. “I am sure, sir, I could not guess—even if I possessed——”

“A board, for example?”

“A board?” She was completely puzzled.

He glanced at her sideways, turned to the panel, and with his forefinger traced the outline of a square upon it against the tree. “*Restaurant pour les Aspirants*,” he announced.

He said it quietly, over his shoulder. The sudden chal-

lenge, her sudden discovery that he knew, made Dorothea gasp. She had not the smallest notion how to answer him, or even what kind of answer he expected; and stood dumb, gazing at his back. A workman, passing, apologised for having brushed her skirt with the step-ladder he carried. She stammered some words of pardon. And just then, to her relief, her brother Endymion’s voice rang out from the doorway.

“Ah, there you are! Well, I declare——” He looked around him. “A Paradise, a perfect Paradise! Indeed, General, your nation has its revenge of us in the arts. You build a temple for us, and on Wednesday I hear you are to provide the music. H’m, h’m, ta—ta—ta . . .” He hummed a few bars of Gluck’s “*Paride ed Elenna*,” and paused, with the gesture of one holding a fiddle, on the verge of a reminiscence. “There was a time—but I no longer compete. And to whom, General, are we indebted for this—ah—treat?”

General Rochambeau indicated young Raoul, who stepped forward from the wall and answered now with a respectful inclination—

“Well, M. le Commissaire, in the first place to Captain Seymour.”

The General bit his moustache: Endymion Westcote frowned. The answer merely puzzled Dorothea, who did not know that Seymour was the name of the British officer to whom the Thétis had struck her colours.

"Moreover," the young man went on imperturbably, "we but repay our debt to M. le Commissaire for the entertainment he affords us."

Dorothea looked up sharply now, even anxiously. But her brother took the shot—if shot it were—for a compliment. He put the awkward idiom aside with a gracious wave of the hand. His brow cleared.

"But we must do something for these poor fellows," he announced, sweeping all the workmen in a gaze; "in mere gratitude we must. A stall, now, at the end of the room under the gallery—with one or two salesmen whom you must recommend to me, General. We might dispose of quite a number of their small carvings and *articles de Paris*, with which the market among the townspeople is decidedly overstocked. The company on Wednesday will be less familiar with them: they will serve as mementoes, and the prices, I daresay, will not be too closely considered——"

"Sir, I beg of you——" General Rochambeau expostulated.

"Eh?"

"They have given their labour, such as it is, in pure gratitude for the kindness shown to them by all in Axcester. That has been the whole meaning of our small enterprise," the old gentleman persisted.

"Still, I don't suppose they'll object if it brings a little beef to their *ragoûts*. Say no more, say no more. What have we here? Eh? 'Bacchus and

Ariadne'? I am rusty in my classics: but Bacchus, Dorothea! This will please Narcissus. We have in our house, sir,"—here he addressed Raoul,—"*a Roman pavement, entirely—ah—concerned with that personage. It is, I believe, unique. One of these days I must give you a permit to visit Bayfield and inspect it with my brother for cicerone. It will repay you——*"

"It will more than repay me," the young man interposed, with his gaze demurely bent on the wall.

"I should have said, it will repay your inspection. You must remind me."

It was clear Raoul had a reply on his tongue. But he glanced at Dorothea, read her expression, and, turning to her brother, bowed again. Her first feeling was of gratitude. A moment later she blamed herself for having asked his forbearance by a look, and him for his confidence in reading it. His eyes, during the moment they encountered hers, had said, "We understand one another." He had no right to assume it, and yet she had not denied it.

Endymion Westcote meanwhile had picked up a small book which lay face downward on one of the step-ladders.

"So here is the source of your inspiration," said he. "An Ovid? How it brings up old school-days at Winchester—old swishings, too, General—hey?" He held the book open, and studied the Ariadne on the wall.

"The source of my inspiration, indeed, M. le Commissaire! But you will not find Ariadne

in that text, which contains only the *Tristia*."

"Ah, but I told you my classics were a bit rusty," replied the Commissary. He made the round of the walls, and commended, in his breezy way, each separate panel. "You must take my criticisms for what they are worth, M. Raoul. But my grandmother was a Frenchwoman, and that gives me a kind of—sympathy, shall we say? Moreover, I know what I like."

Dorothea, accustomed to regard her brother as a demigod, caught herself blushing for him. She was angry with herself.

She caught M. Raoul's murmur, "Heaven distributes to us our talents, monsieur," and was angry with him, understanding and deprecating the raillery beneath his perfectly correct attitude. He kept his attitude to the end. When the time came for parting he bent over her hand and whispered again—

"But it was kind of mademoiselle not to report me."

She heard. It set up a secret understanding between them, which she resented. There was nothing to say, again; yet she had found no way of rebuking him. She was angry with herself all the way home.

CHAPTER III.—A BALL, A SNOWSTORM, AND A SNOWBALL.

Axcester's December ball was a social event of importance in South Somersetshire. At once formal and familiar—familiar, since nine-tenths of the company dwelt close enough together to be on visiting terms—it nicely preluded the domestic festivities of Christmas and the more public ones which began with the New Year, and culminated in the great county balls at Taunton and Bath. Nor were the families around Axcester jaded with dancing, as were those in the neighbourhood of Bath, for example; but discussed dresses and the prospects of the ball for some weeks beforehand, and, when the day came, ordered out the chariot or barouche, in defiance of any ordinary weather.

The weather since Dorothea's visit to the Orange Room had

included frost, a fall of snow with a partial thaw, and a second and much severer frost; and by Wednesday afternoon the hill below Bayfield wore a hard and slippery glaze. Endymion, however, had seen to the roughening of the horses. Thin powdery snow began to fall as the Bayfield barouche rolled past the gates into the highroad; and Narcissus, who considered himself a weather-prophet, foretold a thaw before morning. Unless the weather grew worse the party would drive back to Bayfield; but the old caretaker in the town-house had orders to light fires there and prepare the bedrooms, and in case of detention Dorothea had brought her maid Polly.

In spite of her previous visit, the Orange Room gave her a shock of delight and wonder.

The litter had vanished; the hangings were in place; fresh orange-coloured curtains divided the dancing-floor from the recess beneath the gallery, and this had been furnished as a withdrawing-room, with rugs, settees, groups of green foliage-plants, and candles, the light of which shone through shades of yellow paper. The prisoners, too, had adorned with paper-work in various colours the candelabra, girandoles, and mirrors, which drew twinkles from the long waxed floor, and softened whatever might have been garish in the decorations. Certainly the panels took a new beauty, a luminous delicacy, in their artificial rays; and Dorothea, when, after much greeting and handshaking, she joined one of the groups inspecting them, felt a sort of proprietary pleasure in the praises she heard.

Had she known it, she, too, was looking her best to-night—in an old-maidish fashion, be it understood. She wore a gown of grey muslin, edged with swan's-down and tied with sash and shoulder-knots of a flame-hued ribbon which had taken her fancy at Bath, in the autumn. Her sandalshoes, stockings, gloves, cap—she had worn caps for six or seven years now—even her fan, were of the same ash-coloured grey.

Dorothea knew how to dress. She also knew how to dance. The music made her heart beat faster, and she never entered a ballroom without a sense of happy expectancy. Poor lady!

she never left but she carried home heart-sickness, weariness, and a discontent of which she purged her soul, on her knees, before lying down to sleep. She had a contrite spirit: she knew that her lot was a fortunate one; but she envied Polly her good looks at times. With Polly's face she might have been dancing to her heart's content. Usually she dropped some tears on her pillow after a night's gaiety.

At Bath, at Taunton, at Axminster, it had always been the same, and with time she had learnt to set her hopes low, and steel her heart early to their inevitable disappointment. So to-night she took her seat against the wall and watched while the first three *contre-danses* went by without bringing her a partner. For the fourth—the “Soldiers’ Joy”—she was claimed by an awkward schoolboy, home for the holidays,—whether out of duty or obeying the rule by which shy youths are attracted to middle-aged partners, she could not tell; nor did she ask herself, but danced the dance and enjoyed it more than her cavalier was ever likely to guess. Such a chance had, before now, been looked back upon as the one bright spot in a long night's disappointment. Dorothea loved all schoolboys for the kindness shown to her by these few.

She went back to her seat, hard by a group to which Endymion was discoursing at large. Endymion's was a mellow voice, of rich compass,

and he had a knack of compelling the attention of all persons within range. He preferred this to addressing any one in particular, and his eye sought and found and gathered by instinct the last loiterer without the charmed circle.

"Yes," he was saying, "it is tasteful, and something more. It illustrates, as you well say, the better side of our excitable neighbours across the Channel. Setting patriotism apart, and regarding the question merely in its — ah — philosophical aspect, it has often occurred to me to wonder how a nation so expert in the arts of life, so — how shall I put it? —"

"Natty," suggested one of his hearers; but he waved the word aside.

"——Of such lightness of touch, as I might describe it—I say, it's often occurred to me to wonder how such a nation could so far mistake its destiny and the designs of Providence (inscrutable though they be) as to embark on a career of foreign conquest which can only — ah — have one end."

"Come to grief," put in Lady Bateson, a dowager in a crimson cap with military feathers. She was supposed to cherish a hopeless passion for Endymion. Also she was supposed to be acting as Dorothea's chaperon to-night; but having with little exertion found partners for a niece of her own, a sprightly young lady on a visit from Bath, felt that she deserved to relax her mind in a little intellectual talk.

Endymion accepted her remark with magnificent tolerance.

"Precisely." He inclined towards her. "You have hit it precisely."

Dorothea stole a glance at her brother. Military and hunt uniforms were *de rigueur* at these Axcester balls, and a major of Yeomanry more splendid than Endymion Westcote it would have been hard to find in England. He stood with a hand negligently resting on his left hip — the sword hip — his right foot advanced, the toe of his polished boot tapping the floor. His smile, indulgent as it hovered over Lady Bateson, descended to this protruded leg, and became complacent, as it had a right to be.

"Well, I've always said so from the start," Lady Bateson announced, "and now I'm sure of it. I don't mind Frenchmen *as* Frenchmen; but what I say is, let them stick to their *fal-de-rals*."

"That is the side of them which, in my somewhat responsible position, I endeavour to humour. You see the result." He swept his hand towards the painted panels. "One thing I must say, in justice to my — ah — charges: I find them docile."

Dorothea had confidence in her brother's tact and unerring eye for his audience. Yet she looked about her nervously, to make sure that of the few prisoners selected for invitation to the ball none was within ear-shot. The Vicomte de Tocqueville, a stoical young patrician, had chosen a partner

for the next dance, and was leading her out with that air of vacuity with which he revenged himself upon the passing hour of misfortune. "Go on," it seemed to say; "but permit me to remind you that, so far as I am concerned, you do not exist." Old General Rochambeau and old Rear-Admiral de Wailly-Duchemin, in worn but carefully brushed regimentals, patrolled the far end of the room arm-in-arm. The Admiral seemed in an ill-humour; and this was nothing new—he grumbled at everything. But the General's demeanour as he trotted up and down beside his friend (doubtless doing his best to pacify him) betrayed an unwanted agitation. It occurred to Dorothea that he had not yet greeted her and paid his usual compliment.

"Miss Westcote is not dancing to-night?"

The voice was at her elbow, and she looked up with a start—to meet the gaze of M. Raoul.

"Excuse me"—she wished to explain why she had been startled—"I did not expect——"

"To see me here? It appears that they have given the scene-painter a free ticket, and I assume that it carries permission to dance, provided he does not display in an unseemly manner the patch in the rear of his best tunic." He turned his head in a serio-comic effort to stare down his back. Dorothea admitted to herself that he made a decidedly handsome fellow in his blue uniform with

red facings and corded epaulettes; nor (she decided) does a uniform look any the worse for having seen a moderate amount of service.

"But mademoiselle was in a—what do you call it?—a brown-study, which I interrupted."

"I was wondering why General Rochambeau had not yet come to speak with me."

"I can account for it, perhaps; but first you must answer my question, mademoiselle. Are you not dancing to-night?"

"That will depend, sir, on whether I am asked or no." She said it almost archly, on the moment's impulse; and, the words out, felt that they were over-bold. But she did not regret them when her eyes met his. He was offering his arm, and she found herself joining in his laugh—a happy confidential little laugh. Dorothea cast a nervous glance towards her brother, but Endymion's back was turned. She saw that her partner noted the look, and half-defiantly she nodded towards the gallery as the French musicians struck into a jolly jigging quick-step, with a crash at every third bar.

"But who could help dancing to it?" she murmured.

"Do you know the air? It's the 'Bridge of Lodi,' and we are to dance 'Britannia's Triumph' to it. Come, mademoiselle—since the 'Triumph' is nicely mixed, let your captive lead you."

Those were days of reels, poussettes, ladies' chains, and figure-dancing; honest heel-

and-toe, hopping and twisting, hands across and down the middle—an art contemned now, worse than neglected, insulted by the vulgar caricature of ‘Kitchen Lancers,’ but then seriously practised, delighting the eye, bringing blood to the dancers’ cheeks. For five minutes and more Dorothea was entirely happy. M. Raoul—himself no mean performer—tasted, after his first surprise, something of the joy of discovery. Who could have guessed that this quiet spinster, who held herself and walked as a rule so awkwardly, would prove the best partner in the room? He had not the least doubt of it. Others danced with more abandonment, with more exuberant vigour, — “romped” was his criticism, — but none with such *élan*, perfectly restrained, covering precision with grace. “Hands across, cast off, and wheel”—as their fingers met again he felt the tense nerves, the throb of the pulse beneath the glove. Her lips were parted, her eyes and whole face animated. She was not thinking of him, or of any one; only of the swing and beat of the music, the sway of life and colour, her own body swaying to it, enslaved to the moment and answering no other call.

“I understand now why they call it the ‘Triumph,’” he murmured as he led her back to her seat. She turned her eyes on him as one coming out of a dream.

“I have never enjoyed a

dance so much in my life,” she said seriously.

He laughed. “It must have been an inspiration——” he began, and checked himself, with a glance over his shoulder at the painted panel behind them.

“You were saying——” She looked up after a moment.

“Nothing. Listen to the Ting-tang!” He drew aside one of the orange curtains, and Dorothea heard the note of a bell clanging in a distant street. “Time for all good prisoners to be in bed, and heaven temper the wind to the thin blanket! It is snowing—snowing furiously.”

“Do they suffer much in these winters?”

He shrugged his shoulders. “They die sometimes, though your brother does his best to prevent it. It promises to be a hard season for them.”

“I wish I could help; but Endymion—but my brother does not approve of ladies mixing themselves up in these affairs.”

“Yet he has carried off half-a-dozen to the supper-room, where at a side-table three of my compatriots are vending knick-knacks, to add a little beef to their *ragoûts*.”

“Is it that which has annoyed General Rochambeau?” She had recognised the phrase, but let it pass.

“It is.”

She understood. For some reason her brain was unusually clear to-night. At any other time she would have defended, or at least excused, her brother.

She knew it, and found time to wonder at her new practicality as she answered—

"I must think of some way to help."

She saw his brow clear, saw that she had risen in his esteem, and was glad.

"To *you*, mademoiselle, we shall find it easy to be grateful."

"By helping them," she explained, "I may also be helping my brother. You do not understand him as I do, and you sharpen your wit upon him."

"Be assured it does not hurt him, mademoiselle."

"No; but it hurts *me*."

He bowed gravely. "It shall not hurt you again. Whom you love you shall protect."

"Ah, M. Raoul!" Endymion Westcote hailed from the doorway, and crossed the room with Narcissus in tow. "My brother is interested in your panel of Bacchus and Ariadne: he will be glad to discuss it with you. Br-r-r!"—he shivered—"I have been down to the door, and it is snowing viciously. Some of our friends will hardly find their homes to-night. I hope, by the way, you have brought a greatcoat."

Raoul ignored the question. "I fear, sir, your learning will discover half-a-dozen mistakes," said he, addressing Narcissus, and leading the way towards the panel.

"But whilst I think of it," Endymion persisted, "I saw half-a-dozen old baize chair-covers behind the cloak-room door. Don't hesitate to take

one; you can return it to-morrow or next day." Dorothea being his only audience, he beamed a look on her which said, "They come to us in a hurry, these prisoners: no time to collect a wardrobe; but *I* think of these little things."

"Rest assured, sir, I will turn up my coat-collar," said Raoul; and Dorothea could see him, a moment later, shaking his head good-naturedly, though the Commissary still protested.

Dorothea, left to herself, watched them examining and discussing the panel of Bacchus and Ariadne. The orchestra started another *contre-danse*, but no partner approached to claim her. The dance began. It was the "Dashing White Sergeant," and one exuberant couple threatened to tread upon her toes. She stood up, and, for lack of anything better to do, began to study the panel behind her.

A moment later her hand went up to her throat.

It was the panel on which M. Raoul had sketched an imaginary board with his thumb-nail—the Garden of the Hesperides. But the Perseus was different: he wore the face of M. Raoul himself. And beneath the throat of the nymph on the right, half concealed in the folds about her bosom, hung a small enamelled heart edged with brilliants. Just such a trinket—a brooch—had pinned the collar of her close habit three days before, when she and M. Raoul had stood together discussing the panel. It was a legacy from her mother.

Hastily she put out a hand, and drew the edge of the orange curtain over nymph and locket.

Soon after supper Endymion Westcote informed his sister that it was hopeless to think of returning to Bayfield. The barouche would convey her back to the town-house, but already the snow lay a foot and a half deep, and was still falling. He himself, after packing her off with Narcissus, would remain and attend to the comfort of the guests, many of whom must bivouac at the Dogs' for the night, as best they could.

At midnight, or a little later, the barouche was announced. It drew up close to the porch, axle-deep in snow. Upstairs the orchestra was sawing out the strains of "Major Malley's Reel," as Endymion lifted his sister

in, and slammed the door upon her and Narcissus. The noise prevented his hearing a sash-window lifted immediately above the porch. "Right away!" The inn-servant who had accompanied the Westcotes turned back to trim a candle flaring in the draughty passage. But it so happened that, in starting, the coachman entangled his off-rein in the trace-buckle. Endymion, in his polished hessians, ran round to unhitch it.

On the window-sill above, two deft hands quickly scooped up and moulded a snowball.

"He should turn up his coat-collar, the pig! *V'lan pour le Commissaire!*"

Endymion Westcote did not hear the voice; but as the vehicle rolled heavily forward, out of the darkness a snowball struck him accurately on the nape of the neck.

(To be continued.)

FINDING THE WAY TO THE POLE.

IN these days of fast steamships, good chronometers, and patent logs, there is not very much scope for the practice of the fine old methods of navigation which relied almost entirely upon observation of the sun, moon, and stars to give the position of the ship at sea. The modern navigator has buried the best part of his astronomy under a heap of dead reckonings and log-readings, with the Greenwich time shown by a whole battery of chronometers. Gone out of all ordinary use is the beautiful method of finding the longitude from "lunar distances," for the perfection of which the Royal Observatory at Greenwich was founded: it was superseded almost before the labours of astronomers had placed it on a secure footing; and it lingers on now in the columns of the nautical almanacs only as a stand-by in a last extremity, and a cause of stumbling to the midshipmen of his Majesty's navy. Eminently practical the new navigation is, especially to those who sail in the cloudy seas about our own part of the world, in days when one can no more afford to hang about the mouth of the Channel waiting for a sight of the sun and moon, than to look at the end of the summer for a snug harbour in which to winter, after the ancient mode. But there are some people who have loved navigation because it is a branch of astronomy, and a materially

useful outcome of that science, to be commended to those sordid folk who ask of the scientists' work whether there is any money in it; and they cannot help regretting the fact that in the everyday handling of a ship at sea there is little need now for any more astronomical data than were available almost two centuries ago. The expert lunarians—the men who found their longitude from observations of the moon—are gone from ships, like the Mississippi pilots whose skill Mark Twain has immortalised, and one cannot watch their going without regret for a fine art fallen into disuse. In the words of Captain Slocum of the *Spray*, "The work of the lunarian, though seldom practised in these days of chronometers, is beautifully edifying, and there is nothing in the realm of navigation that lifts one's heart more in adoration."

We cannot but admit, however, that Captain Slocum professed this belief rather as a pious opinion than as a rule of life; for those who have read the delightful account of his voyage alone round the world will remember that he scarcely lived up to his own opinions and practised what he praised. He stands self-convicted of having done more guessing than he was even by naturalisation entitled to do, marking the position of his ship upon the charts "by intuition, I think, more than slavish calculations."

But he lived up to the traditions of the old circumnavigators when he sailed without a chronometer, for sufficient reasons: and by the help of the sun and moon he found his way with only one mishap, when he "hugged the shore entirely too close." His voyage was, perhaps, a triumph of observation of the ways rather of the seas and the winds around than of the heavens above him; and if we would see how beautiful a thing it is to find one's way by the stars, which is our present purpose, we should turn rather to a volume which has recently appeared, of some of the scientific results of Nansen's North Polar expedition.¹ The narrative of that successful venture has not lost interest in the years which have elapsed since Nansen came home, even though his record of "farthest north" no longer stands. But the chart first published of the voyage of the *Fram*, and the track of the desperate sledge expedition, were only approximately right. Until all the observations had been thoroughly discussed and the calculations remade, it was not possible to say exactly how nearly they were right. That is now done, and an uncommonly interesting piece of work it makes.

The most noticeable peculiarity of astronomical observation at sea is, that fixed instruments cannot be used, because of the unsteady motion of the ship. The sextant held in the hand is an instrument of small power,

and of little accuracy as astronomical instruments go, for the reason that a powerful telescope cannot be fixed upon it. Power in a telescope implies length, and the longer the telescope the harder it is to keep the sun in view, when it needs practised sea-legs to keep the instrument from waving about over a space of sky as big as the Great Bear. But on board the *Fram* this difficulty at least was absent. For three years the ship was held fast in the ice and drifted with it on an even keel. It was almost possible to adopt the plan of the examinee who answered that he should proceed to find the latitude at sea by setting up a meridian circle upon deck. The *Fram's* deck was encumbered with dogs, and every now and then the whole ship was lifted by the pressure of the ice below her. The ice-field round her afforded a better post for observation: they built a pillar of ice and capped it with slate, so that the feet of the instrument should not melt their way in when the metal got warm in the sun; and there Scott Hansen set up an altazimuth, very like a large surveyor's theodolite, and a far better instrument than a sextant. He could make observations for the position of the ship as conveniently as if he had been in the camp of a geodetic survey party ashore.

Now it is a heresy of which the writers of sea stories are the chief apostles, that the time at sea is found from the alti-

¹ The Norwegian North Polar Expedition, 1893-96. Scientific Results. Edited by Fridtjof Nansen. Vol. ii.

tude of the sun at noon, when it is the custom to cry aloud "Eight bells." Of course it is not so; and the reason why is not hard to follow when one considers what is the reason for taking that altitude. The observation at noon is made to find how high the sun rises that day above the horizon of the ship's place: when we know that, and how far the sun is north or south of the equator, which is to be found in the almanac, we know the latitude of the ship at noon. The observation is the simplest possible, for at noon the altitude of the sun is changing very slowly: that is just the reason why one cannot find the time from it with an instrument like the sextant. The time observations are made morning and evening, when the sun's altitude is changing quickly. The moment of observation is then sharply defined, and it is not hard to calculate how far that moment is from noon—to find the local time, in fact; thence by comparison with the standard Greenwich time, which the chronometers show, the longitude of the ship is known.

The quick change in altitude is the point essential for a good result, and that brings us at once to one of the difficulties which confronted the observers on the *Fram*. When one is in the arctic regions the heights of the heavenly bodies change very slowly, for they are all circling about the pole of the sky, which is nearly overhead. In summer there is perpetual sun, but it makes up for never setting by never rising very

high: in winter, when the sun has gone, the stars move in paths which are nearly parallel to the horizon. They are but little higher at their highest than at their lowest, and a few degrees from the pole it is as hard to determine the time within five minutes as it is within five seconds at the equator. So near the pole it must inevitably be hard to find the local time and the longitude. Latitudes are as easy there as farther south, which is a fortunate thing, for after all in a polar expedition latitude is the main consideration, and longitudes will be a matter of serene indifference to the fortunate man who reaches the pole, where all longitudes are the same.

There was, however, one really necessary condition that must be fulfilled before it was possible to find the position of the ship, and that was that sun or stars should be visible. Clouds and the dismal arctic fog blotted out the sky all too frequently, as in more temperate climes; but there was a difficulty more serious than cloud or fog. During the summer months the sun, always above the horizon, made perpetual day, and he was always available for observation, though there was no night and no stars. All through the winter perpetual night there were the stars, and for ten days or so a month perpetual moon. But between whiles, in the spring and autumn, there was nothing at all to observe. The sun even at noon was so low that its rays passed

always through the dense cold air that lay over the ice; there was no calculating what abnormal effects the refraction of such air might cause. And when after skirting along the horizon it did sink a degree or two out of sight, there was no dark, but a long bright twilight in which no stars were seen. For at least three months in the year scarcely an observation was possible; the *Fram* was fast in the ice, drifting with it at the mercy of wind and current, and trusting to the drift to carry it across the pole. But there was no possibility of telling how the venture fared until as winter came on a star at last showed up in the waning twilight, or the sun came back in spring to the north of the equator and rose clear above the ice.

There were here conditions enough to make the problem of finding day by day the *Fram*'s position a matter of no ordinary perplexity to the men who had to do it, and of unusual interest to those who retrace now the steps of their journey. But so far we have seen only the ordinary sea routine, modified a little by the fact that it was possible to establish on an ice pillar near the ship an instrument of accuracy ordinarily unknown at sea, and limited a good deal by the impossibility of doing anything at all at two seasons of the year. Summer and winter there were the daily observation of sun or stars for latitude and the true local time. It needed only a chronometer to show true Greenwich time, and the longi-

tude would have been known with the ease which has made navigation in these days almost uninteresting from the astronomer's point of view. The *Fram* carried three chronometers, tested and rated with all care before the voyage began. But who was to say what change in their rate the intense arctic cold might not have caused?

Under ordinary conditions the performance of a modern chronometer is astonishing. Every year the leading makers send their best work to Greenwich, to compete for the honour of purchase for the use of the Navy. At the Royal Observatory the chronometers are compared for some months with the standard clock—one of them some years ago actually beat it,—and they are baked in an oven to discover how they will run in the temperature of the Red Sea. But an observatory cannot easily command sixty degrees of frost; it is impossible to predict beforehand how a chronometer will stand the arctic winter—there must be some way found of checking it, of finding at the ship what is actually the true Greenwich time, to see if the chronometer which professes to show it is running true. This necessity brought the officers of the *Fram* back in effect to the old days before chronometers could be trusted under any circumstances, when every determination of longitude at sea involved finding by observation not only the local time, but the Greenwich time as well.

Telegraphic signals and chronometers excepted, the only

way of finding somewhere else the time at Greenwich is by watching something happen of which the Greenwich time of happening is known. An eclipse of the sun will serve, but these do not occur often enough to be of much use. An eclipse of the moon will not do, for the shadow cast by the earth has no hard edge, and the moon drifts into the shadow almost imperceptibly. There are eclipses of the moons of Jupiter, which are frequent. And lastly, there is the rapid motion of our moon among the stars, which furnishes a celestial clock admirably beautiful, but very troublesome to read. We are not so well off as the inhabitants of Mars must be, if there are any. They have a strange moon which rises in the west, rushes up to its meridian passage in an hour and a half, plunges down to its setting in the east, and a few hours afterwards rises again in the west. With such a moon it would be the simplest thing in the world to find the standard time at sea: the more is the pity that some people would have us believe that the Martians sail entirely on canals. We, on our earth, have only a slow-going moon which moves among the stars over a space equal to its own diameter in about an hour. The bright stars scattered along its path serve as milestones to time its journey, or as the figures on the face of the clock to tell the hours and minutes. Many pages of the 'Nautical Almanac' are devoted to showing how far the moon will be from

chosen points of the road for every hour of Greenwich time. The navigator has but to measure and find how far the moon has gone upon her journey to know the time at Greenwich. It is as though a man with a time-table should find his way to one of the mile-posts on the railway, and set his watch by the time that the Scotch express ran past. There is just this difference, that the moon is always up to time, but never races ahead of it.

This, shorn of all encumbering technicalities, is the method of "lunar distances" for correcting the chronometers and finding the Greenwich time at sea. It is a troublesome business, not at all to the taste of the average sailor, and it takes a smart man to get the result right within thirty seconds. Nowadays, when fast steamships are out of sight of land so short a time, the average time of three good chronometers is scarcely likely to be uncertain by more than that: the need of a check upon them has gone, and the beautiful method has fallen into disuse.

But the *Fram* was more than three years away from home, and the chronometers were exposed to very severe conditions. Some sort of check upon them was absolutely necessary, if the explorers were to produce any sufficient evidence of where they had been: had any one been asked how it was to be done, he would naturally have said, by lunar distances. The answer is not right. The

method was tried on the *Fram*, and it failed completely. In the perpetual day of summer, with a misty sky white from the glare of the sun upon the ice, the low moon was not to be seen. In the arctic winter the terrible cold had so affected the sextants that they were quite useless for this delicate observation.

Here was a dilemma. There was a ship at sea, with its chronometers presumably going wrong, and the sea method of correcting them broken down. There is no way out of the difficulty, until we remember that for practical purposes the ship was not at sea. All around was solid ice on which a telescope could stand as firm as on shore. What more simple than to observe eclipses of the sun and of the moons of Jupiter, and find Greenwich time from them? A hopeless solution, one would be tempted here in England to say, where eclipses of the sun have been few and far between, while Jupiter has lately been visible only for a few hours in the short summer nights, very low down in the south. Yet up near the pole six years ago the method was made to work, and by the aid of a happy combination of circumstances it worked very well. There were actually three eclipses of the sun visible in the three years. Two out of the three were successfully observed in a clear sky, both of them in the spring, when the stars had gone for the summer. For months afterwards nothing

more could be done; upon those two eclipses all the summer longitudes depend.

The return of winter brought Jupiter's moons into view once more, under conditions which have, perhaps, for the matter in hand never been equalled. Every tourist who has visited the North Cape in summer knows the phenomenon of the perpetual sun, at least by repute. Some of the astronomers who went round the North Cape in 1896 to see the total eclipse of the sun from the Varanger Fjord made a discovery to their confusion. They undertook one day for the amusement of their friends to calculate the time of moon-rise—and the sum had no answer! The moon did not rise that night—there was perpetual moon too. But the navigators of the *Fram* made a yet more brilliant discovery. They found and made good use of a perpetual Jupiter. In those years Jupiter was about as far as possible north of the equator, and all through the winters he was as perpetual as the sun at midsummer. There was no looking up an eclipse of one of his moons in the almanac, only to find that they were all below the horizon, an experience too common farther south. If only the sky were clear they could observe every eclipse that was predicted, day or night, for day and night were the same, and Jupiter was always up.

This method of finding the Greenwich time by watching for eclipses of the moons of Jupiter is so well known that

it is in all the text-books,—a consummation achieved too often only by the time the method has been abandoned, or altered out of all knowledge; nor is the present case any real exception to the rule. No one would dream of finding the time thus were any other method available, for neither can the observations be made with the required accuracy nor can the true time of the eclipse of one of the little moons be predicted without considerable error. That the latter should be the case is perhaps not altogether creditable to astronomers. The nautical almanacs use still the tables of Baron Damoiseau, published in 1836, because no newer are available. It is a matter of common knowledge that predictions based upon them are often somewhat seriously wrong; yet until within the last twenty years very little has been done to effectually remedy this state of things. It is therefore all the more satisfactory to know that two long investigations are now being brought to a close which should put the theory upon a basis strong enough to bear the weight of modern criticism. However, this new work is not yet available: in the working up of the Fram observations, the best possible must be made of the old; and this is how the matter stood. Whenever the almanac announced that an eclipse was due, and the sky was clear, Scott Hansen had gone to the telescope on the ice, and turned it upon Jupiter. The four little moons are all visible, shining like stars of the sixth

magnitude. Suddenly one of them begins to grow dim; it is passing into the shadow which the sun casts behind the planet. In a short time it has vanished entirely, and the time of disappearance is noted as exactly as may be, within two or three seconds perhaps. In a few hours it will pass out of the shadow; the observer knows very nearly where it will appear again, and as the time approaches he strains his gaze to catch the first glimpse of returning light. Again the time is noted. Now the certainty with which it is possible to note the time of disappearance or reappearance of a faint shred of light depends upon a host of things: the size of the telescope, the clearness of the air, and keenness of vision are some of them. Two observers ten miles apart, with telescopes of different sizes, would vary somewhat in their estimates. Much more certain was it that the Fram observations, made with small telescopes on the ice in the misty arctic air, with Jupiter always low though never setting, would be discordant from the results obtained with ampler means in the comparative comfort of a civilised observatory. Yet it was necessary to make the comparison, for only by the use of the latter was it possible to purge the predicted times of their grosser errors: the epithet is no whit too strong to apply to errors of a minute of time, insufferable in a prediction of this kind. Professor Geelmuuyden of Christiania, who taught the explorers their astronomy before they started, and undertook the

discussion of all the observations they brought back, was forced to collect results from all over the world, to arrive at some idea of how far the predictions really were wrong. It must be a source of great pleasure to the energetic owner of a certain private observatory in New South Wales, to think that the observations of Jupiter's moons that he made during the years of Nansen's journey have been of immense value to prove what way the *Fram* really went when she drifted in the ice past the pole.

And to what result did it lead, this sitting out on the ice in the cold, watching for the eclipses of Jupiter's moons to find the time at Greenwich? It was the only check upon the chronometers that could be made in winter, when they were the more likely to go wrong. Nor was the check unnecessary, for it turned out that of the three chronometers one ran very well, and two rather badly. Had there been no check, there would have been nothing for it but to take an average of good and bad alike. As it was, the evidence of two was peremptorily ruled out of court; the third was found trustworthy, and there are not many days in those three winters on which the position of the *Fram* is uncertain by so much as a mile.

'Twill be a long time before we read of a finer piece of

work than was done by Captain Sigurd Scott Hansen, the navigating officer on that memorable voyage. Nansen has drawn a graphic sketch of the delights of arctic exploration when you drive your ship into the ice as near as may be to the chosen place, and sit down to wait comfortably for the drift of the ice to carry you across the pole. Perhaps in his enthusiasm for the *Fram* he has overdrawn the picture of the snug life on board; yet at least it was far worse without. One cannot admire too much the desperate determination of Scott Hansen to leave no observation unmade which could help to determine beyond all doubt the position of the ship, though the thermometer showed seventy degrees of frost, and bare metal burned like red hot iron in the intense cold. Overboard on to the ice he went day by day, and many times a-day, bent on showing that he had learned his lesson well from the professor at Christiania, that though the everyday navigator can afford to lay aside as too cumbrous and troublesome the beautiful methods of finding the way by the stars and the moon, when it comes to a pinch in the arctic seas—and not less in other parts of the world—navigation is no more a distant connection, but becomes again to-day, as it was in the past, the adopted daughter of astronomy.

GAMES IN OLD AND MODERN FRANCE.

BY ANDREW LANG.

THAT a game of dominoes is a Frenchman's favourite form of physical exercise was at one time the opinion of the English. This was never a correct theory, for fencing, so widely practised in France, is one of the best exercises possible, bringing all sorts of muscles into action, and demanding the same kind of calculation and astuteness as the invention and delivery of "head-balls" at cricket. No man who fences for an hour a-day, hard, is short of exercise. In concentrated exercise fencing is as good as fives. Not to speak of the physical training of the army (which is valuable rather than pleasant), the modern Frenchman is, or may be, an oarsman, and football has not appealed to him in vain. In the projects of some French educational reformers one has seen the suggestion that at Rugby football it should be enough to touch the runner with the ball, as collaring him is a violent, dangerous, and barbaric procedure. There are obvious practical objections to this football "with arms of courtesy." The runners could not go half-a-dozen yards without being touched. Yet our game is more "courteous," or less violent, than the American form, in which the men are padded and guarded, while accidents are many and severe. Our game seems a happy

medium between mere "tig" on one hand and the ironclad American pastime. However, the "tig" or touching game was only a schoolmaster's idea, and the French have met a Scots team at regular "rugger." The French papers, however, were not justified in reporting that "the Scots wore their coquettish national costume," the philabeg. Another French student of physical education has proposed the introduction of baseball, "without the violence which the Americans have imported into the game." But this pastime would be very like rounders, which is a game for girls and children. As for cricket, that "does not set the genius of the Latin races," an opinion *a priori*: the Latin races might try the experiment.

On the whole, games do not flourish in France; they are only beginning to revive after two centuries of disuse. Up to 1700 or so the French had been the most gamesome people in Europe, and the least afraid of active exercise under a hot sun. As for "violence," from tournaments and jousts to *soule*, or hockey, it was the breath of their nostrils till the decadence of Louis XIV.

These facts, already known to readers of M. Siméon Luce, have been reinforced by M. Jusserand in his new book, 'Les Sports et Jeux d'Exercice

dans l'Ancienne France.' M. Jusserand is anxious that his young countrymen should "play up," and revive the ancient glories of the country which was the mistress of medieval Europe in sports and pastimes. The very word "sport," as he remarks, is the French *desport*, *desporter*, and it is certain that some of our games, especially tennis, *la paume*, were directly borrowed from the French, as the terms of the pastime prove. It is also true that the Norman archers practically won the battle of Senlac: the old English, like the Spartans and Homeric Greeks, and the Scots, despising "long bowls," and desiring to come to hand-strokes. But I do not feel certain that the English long-bow was borrowed from the Normans. Our historians usually attribute the marked use of the weapon to Edward I., who imported it from his Welsh opponents. The learning of the subject will be found in Mr Charles Longman's historical essay in the 'Badminton Book of Archery.' In any case the English, from Edward I. onwards, notoriously improved on the foreign use of the bow, even as employed by their Norman conquerors. Archery clubs, put down at the Revolution, flourish in Northern France, and probably our toxophilites would be glad to give them a meeting.

As to games, as early as 1319 a royal ordinance of Philip the Long, in the interests of archery, denounced *palet*, *quilles* (skittles), *soule* (hockey, and, when played without a club, football), and

similar games. Our Scots law was equally hard on football and golf in the following century. In 1363 Edward III. denounced all ball games—football, hand-ball, and stick-ball (*pila bacularis*)—also *cambuca*, which some have regarded as equivalent to golf. Now there are many sorts of stick-ball, as pall-mall (*jeu de mail*), hockey, golf, and the curious golf of modern Flanders, wherein you may hit your opponent's ball into a hazard. The clubs are deeply spooned irons, the ball is of beech-wood. Among games of stick-ball may have been rudimentary cricket, played with a crooked club, in this country, during the early eighteenth century. We must remember this possibility, as the origins of cricket are very obscure, and M. Jusserand claims France as its birthplace. All such claims are perilous. Who invented skittles? The French had skittles, if *quilles* are skittles, very early. A skittle-frame of the fifteenth century has been found in an old English house; and the author of a work on the game, of about 1770, minutely describes Chinese and Persian skittles. This illustrious game *may* have been brought to Western Europe by the Crusaders, or may be a developed form of the "nine-men's-morris," and of independent evolution. The Spanish conquerors under Cortes found the Aztecs playing a form of tennis, with a stone circle for the *grille*, and this game the Aztecs did not borrow from Europeans. The Red Indians had what the French call *la*

crosse before Europeans landed, and *la crosse* is only a species of hockey or *soule*. Thus games may be independently invented (as in the case of Aztec backgammon) in various regions. Moreover, it is not certain how many of our games may be of Roman introduction, so that the whole topic of the origin of games is dark. The people deserve the credit who bring the game to perfection, as the French did in the case of tennis, and as, almost certainly, the Dutch did in the case of golf. The ingenious researches of Mr James Cunningham, in Holland, leave little doubt on that head. Medieval Scotland, purchasing all its commodities from Holland, bought golf-balls there till the reign of James VI., after which we became the teachers of the world in this pastime, now for long neglected by the Batavian inventors.

Tennis is the game of kings, and as it now exists is purely French, though in France much neglected. When Paris had but eight booksellers she had thirteen master-makers of tennis-balls (1292). The working-classes played; and in 1485 the clergy were forbidden to play publicly and in their shirt-sleeves. Among the documents about that extraordinary person, the false Joan of Arc, is the statement of a priest that he had played at tennis with her. Guy de Laval, the writer of an interesting letter on the true Joan of Arc, mentions that he had been playing tennis when he first met this "thing all divine," the Maid. The game of *la longue paum * was

at first played, like our lawn-tennis, in the open air, which explains how working people could afford the expense. It is the court that makes tennis a game for the rich. The best balls came from France, and were stuffed with dogs' hair,— "the old ornament of his cheek hath already stuffed tennis-balls," as M. Jusserand cites Claudio's banter of Benedick. It seems that before Charles VIII. tennis was played with the hand, then with the gloved hand, then with a glove faced with crossed strings, and finally with the *raquette*. The game of to-day was full-grown as to implements, counting, and chases, though not as to side-walls, before 1555. For long tennis a kind of parchment-covered racquet, as a battledore, was used; and a fragment of the lost books of Livy is said to have been found on such a racquet. Tennis was played everywhere. James I. of Scotland played, to his ruin, in an open court; but under the Valois kings, or rather later, the covered and walled court was introduced, with all its advantages. These courts were styled *tripots*. We know that Darnley played tennis with Riccio shortly before the murder of that minstrel. Whether the court was open or not does not appear. The pent-house and the grille look as if they had been adapted from a pent-house and small window in the court of a chateau, just as the Eton game of fives has been evolved in its peculiar form out of a casual buttress in the wall.

In 1596 an Italian traveller

notes that there were two hundred and fifty tennis-courts in Paris, and a Venetian ambassador declares that there were eighteen hundred. M. Jusserand cites a crusty English tourist of 1598, Robert Dallington, who complains that the French played tennis in the heat of the day, when he was fain to sit in the shade. The game was probably the open-air game, long tennis; but what an unworthy, un-English tourist was this! If the Elizabethan sportsman was afraid of the sun, national characters have altered. I remember, at Pau, an April day so tropical that Britons found the shade intolerable, and the only way to endure the heat was to go and play cricket. But no alien played except a Dutchman, and, for reasons which are neither here nor there, I so far forgot myself as to bowl at his legs, which I did not miss. It was the French who sat under awnings and ate ices, as I doubt not that the malcontent Dallington had a cool flask beside him while he watched the French tennis players in 1598. He says that the English, though they followed French customs, neglected the *jeu de mail*, or pall-mall. But Queen Mary's enemies declare that *she* played pall-mall after Darnley's death—conduct unworthy of a mourning widow. Scotland was before England in adopting the *jeu de mail*.

We really cannot admit Dallington, "the gruncher" (*grincheux*), as a fair example of a

Briton of the age of Sir Philip Sidney. But, undeniably, the French were then more given to hard exercise at games than our ancestors in England were. In Scotland we were hard at golf, and pall-mall, and tennis, as we read in James Melvill's Diary; and golf crossed the Border with James VI. How, then, and why, did games desert France for England? Partly, I think, because one Poquelin, otherwise Molière, and other actors, set up their theatres in tennis-courts. The dramatic art usurped the field of the game, and as it waxed tennis waned. Louis XIV., unlike Charles II., seems to have been slack at tennis. At this very time the Duke of York was a champion at golf and *jeu de mail*, in the Mall and on the links of Leith. But the majestic warrior, Louis XIV., probably could not bear to be beaten at tennis, and preferred to hang about among the women. People grew intellectual, talked literature, went to the play, philosophised, flirted, and ceased to take exercise except in the dance. In 1627 the Dutch ambassador counted a hundred and fourteen tennis-courts in Paris; in 1780 there were only ten; and the tennis-court at Versailles was degraded to a scene of radical agitation, as may be read in Carlyle and other authorities. One cannot imagine the *philosophes* and their friends bounding about a tennis-court. Meanwhile, in England, happy England, cricket was already a game for men, and our hearts of oak, about 1670, pitched their stumps

in Syria, where they did not strike root. The Syrian sun is hot enough, but times and national character were altering: France was deserting her tennis-courts, Britons were pitching the stumps on alien shores.

The fact, however we may explain it, is that the English educated classes took up the popular pastimes, such as cricket, improved, organised, and codified them, just when the higher social ranks of France were abandoning even games already organised. Our public schools, Winchester, Eton, and Harrow, gave to cricket the attention which it deserves; and when the boys left they played with the yokels at Hambledon and on a hundred other village greens. Then Mr Lord took his ground, and the M.C.C. codified the rules of the game. In France the *noblesse* had no Eton or Winchester, did not keep up in their parks the games which "Horace Waddlepoodle" despised at school; and, generally, the French upper classes took to philosophy and flirting. The Revolution and the wars were unfavourable to pastimes, and except in country places among the peasants and *bourgeoisie*, they ceased to exist. To an observer on this side of the Channel it appears that before France can again become a gamesome country, there must be a considerable change in her society and in the methods of her public schools. The public schools and the village clubs (like the famed Lascelles Hall club in Yorkshire) are the cradles of manly pastimes. In this department the actual

Lycées are at present inactive. But there are regions of France, chiefly in the north and in Brittany, where the villagers keep up the medieval games with enthusiastic energy. A writer of 1855 describes a kind of "scrimmage" at *soule* or *choule* (the Irish "hurling," our "bandy-ball," shinty, or hockey), and the picture closely resembles a "scrimmage" at the old unreformed Rugby football of Tom Brown's period. *Soule* is of extreme antiquity in France, but I see no reason to suppose that England borrowed it either as a stick-game (hockey) or a foot-game (football). The sport is natural—nay, inevitable. A boy is kicking or hitting a ball in one direction, the first boy he meets kicks or hits it in the opposite direction. Reflection adds goals of one kind or another, and the game is born. The Vikings played; we read of hockey in the days of Grettir. The heroic Irish played; we hear of hurling-matches in the ancient Irish legends, half-myth, half-history. Even the Australian black fellows had their native unborrowed "punt-about": they had not developed goals.

The French *soule*, therefore, in all its varieties, was a natural game existing everywhere. Men and boys lost their tempers, and used their clubs to thump their opponents in old Iceland, in old Ireland, and, as many records prove, in old France. Henri II. was a player, and the "Prince of Poets," Pierre Ron-sard, won a match for the king's side by his swiftness and skill. M. Jusserand admits that there is no proof of the borrowing of

this game by England from France, or the reverse. As I have remarked, it is a natural game, springing up in every soil. It was as popular in mediæval as in modern Scotland. But local conditions are stereotyped in local rules, and some of these local rules became popular, and are codified, as in the Rugby and Eton games, while "The Wall" and the Winchester game are confined to their birthplaces. In polo we have simply hockey on horseback, a very ancient oriental sport brought to England in recent years. In France the native football survives most strongly in Brittany, and hockey or *soule*, with various rules, on the Flemish frontier and in Picardy. The peasants and miners do their duty by these games; but the pupils of the *Lycées* have not kept them up at school, and do not, therefore, continue to practise them in early manhood. There is no community of pastime, as in England, between the boys of the educated classes and the village lads, who among us supply the professionals. The *Lycée* lads in the holidays do not play against the village lads, as far as I gather, and this appears to be the chief reason why France is not the country of athletic sports that it was of old. Till the breach between social classes is crossed in the matter of games, till the *Lycée* boys play football and *soule* at school, and play at home in the holidays with the parish athletes, games will not revive in France. As M. Jusserand remarks, orators declare that cricket does not suit the Latin

genius. It would have to be borrowed full-grown from England (which would not be popular), and we see that it does not suit the Americans. They want a more rapid game—baseball or football. They would be wearied by a three days' match, perhaps a "draw," perhaps as slow as a defensive innings often is. Cricket suits all manner of Indian races—witness the Parsee players and the Rajpoots. It suits the Samoans, the negroes of our West Indian colonies, and the Australian black fellows. But the Americans (with exceptions, notably at Philadelphia) do not take to cricket, and I do not expect to see the Departments of France play each other, or to find cricket established at the *Lycées*. The path of French sportive development seems more likely to follow the lines of rowing, hockey, *la crosse*, and football.

None the less M. Jusserand thinks that we borrowed cricket from France. The word *criquet* means a stick planted in the ground. Such a stick, associated with a ball game, is mentioned in a MS. of 1478. But it may have been a stick to play or putt a ball at, as in croquet and rudimentary golf. We find no mention of cricket in England before the reign of Edward IV.; but it may have been one of the games of ball and stick condemned in the mass by Edward III. Cotgrave's Anglo-French Dictionary (1611) speaks of cricket, and, as a French equivalent, gives *crosse* from *crosse*, a crooked stick with which small boys play at cricket. But *did* French boys

play cricket in 1611, or did Cotgrave merely choose to call by the name of "cricket" a French game played, like Jacobean cricket, with a crooked stick? We know no mention of a French game called *criquet*. No French representation of cricket, in art, is found before 1750, and then the artist, Gravelot, had lived in England, and drawn cricket players there. M. Jusserand mentions, but does not reproduce, a picture of a table (like a billiard-table) "with *piquets*, or stumps, ball, and bat, among the miniatures of the 'Livre d'Ango,' about 1514." This would be a table game of "little cricket," and would imply the previous existence in France of real field-cricket. In a later edition perhaps M. Jusserand may reproduce this miniature, which ought to settle the question. One is anxious to know how many stumps are used. It is a strong argument for M. Jusserand that the Oxford Dictionary derives "cricket" from the French *criquet*. But the derivation is not certain. Any stick game is *crosse* in France, and though both Cotgrave (1611) and Urquhart (1653) translate *crosse* by cricket, it does not follow that cricket flourished in France. The subject needs further research: at present M. Jusserand seems to me to be "one up" in the argument, and the French miniature of about 1514 may settle the question. But cricket was a man's game in England during the Restoration; and England

made and codified the rules, added the third stump, the straight bat, overhand bowling, and other essentials. M. Jusserand gives us due credit for the actual game. If he proves to be right in his theory of its French origin (as I incline to think that he is), perhaps his countrymen will more readily return to the glorious pastime which they abandoned long ago. The fencers of France have all the qualities of head, legs, and arms which fit them to excel at cricket. They would soon overcome that aversion to being "cut over" which was no part of the national character before the reign of Louis XIV.

If an alien might offer a suggestion to the persons who wish to introduce sportive exercises in French schools, I would whisper, Begin with fives and squash rackets. The courts occupy little space, the exercise is of the best, they do not require the day-long period of a cricket match, and the game is rapid, brisk, and bustling. Next, if a school does not possess a dozen acres or so of level ground under grass, the game known as "snob-cricket," little cricket, "stump-and-ball," and so forth, might be introduced. If it became popular with the boys, regular cricket would soon be in demand.

M. Jusserand offers good descriptions of the various games cognate to golf which are very ancient in France. A Book of Hours of the fifteenth century shows a man "addressing himself to his ball." His club has a head like a shovel, flat, thin,

and broad; or again we may compare it to the mace (*masse*) used at bagatelle. The player advances his left leg and plays off it; he hits with the side of his club, as at golf. In *jeu de mail*, at least since 1700, the club is hammer-shaped like a croquet-mallet. The swing, inculcated in Lautier's book of 1717, is precisely the orthodox swing at golf. The late Mr Quaritch outbid me for the only copy of Lautier I ever saw, so I quote him from 'L'Académie des Jeux' (1752, Amsterdam). He bids us swing from the hips, but "keep your eye on the ball" ("sans perdre la boule de vue"). "Slow back," says Lautier ("On ne doit pas lever le mail trop vite"), and the wider the curve described by the club the better. Some play only with the arms, he says, but the swing is the thing. The left elbow must not be raised (as in Mr ——'s style), and the directions as to the grip are orthodox. A prolonged "waggle" in addressing the ball is justly denounced. If you use too long a club, you sciaff; if too short a club, you are apt to top ("prendre la boule par les cheveux"). Obviously the prime rules of play are identical with those of golf; but the balls were made of box-tree roots, whereas in Scotland we had for centuries used balls stuffed with feathers before gutta-percha came in. Louis Brun, a Provençal player, could drive 400 yards, probably on a smooth, hard, artificial ground. In Paris you might tee your ball for each stroke ("mettre sa boule en beau"), not so in Provence. In playing at the *passe*

(which I think was an elevated iron circle) a lofting iron (*la léve*) was used. What kind of clubs were used for playing out of hazards does not appear. To hit your companions or caddy (*porte-léve*) was only "a rub in the green." There are as many rules as at golf, and they are of much the same nature. This game is now played chiefly at Montpellier along roads. There must be many lost balls. In 1752 fore-caddies were employed, as in the Scotland of the period, to find the ball. Except for putting, the *jeu de mail* was almost identical with golf. As early as the sixteenth century Flemish players putted to holes; the Scots followed suit.

I have only touched on a few of the games described by M. Jusserand. His chapters on tournaments and jousts, though learned and interesting, deal with times and exercises long passed away. His object is to help to revive healthy and manly pastimes, and to remind France that, in imitating our sports, she only "takes back her own." Many designs from medieval and later works of art illustrate this valuable book, especially interesting to the student of the evolution of games, and of the social conditions in which they thrive. Their nature is "to bring together people who would not otherwise meet." If games are to revive in France, it must be by virtue of the reunion of classes. The social pastimes of football, hockey, and cricket are much preferable to the excitements of "motors."

A CHINAMAN IN LONDON.

IN the year 1875 the civilised world was shocked by the news that Mr Margary, of the British consular service in China, had been murdered in the frontier province of Yunnan with the approval, if not with the connivance, of the Chinese Government. After lengthy negotiations it was arranged that an embassy should be sent from Peking to London to apologise for the crime; and it was further determined that, for the improvement of political relations between the two countries, the ambassador should become the first resident representative of China at the Court of St James's. Happily for the two empires an official was chosen for the office who was eminently fitted for the post. Kuo Sung-t'ao, the mandarin appointed, was essentially a liberal-minded man: he was of an extremely courteous nature, and was pronounced by Mr Gladstone to be the most genial Oriental he had ever met. He had studied, also, European politics, and had even attempted to learn English. He came, therefore, with every advantage, and with a cordial desire to promote friendly relations between the two countries. In this he was thoroughly successful; and when he went back to China in 1879 he left a wide circle of friends and acquaintances, both official and otherwise, who sincerely regretted his departure. Happily

for us he brought as one of his secretaries a man who was imbued with the true spirit of a diarist. Chang had already once before visited England on a temporary mission, and added to his qualifications the possession of a considerable knowledge of English. He was able and willing, therefore, to make himself useful while in London. He went everywhere where his chief went, and to many places to which Kuo did not go. He saw and heard everything he could, and with exemplary diligence entered his daily experiences in a diary. Still better, he published his records for the benefit of his countrymen, and the work now lies before us in eight slim volumes. For Englishmen its usefulness is considerably curtailed by the fact of its being published in Chinese; and even were it rendered into English, there would be much which would be uninteresting. He describes everything at length, and enters into minute details as to the daily life in the country which, though doubtless read with eagerness by his compatriots, form superfluous knowledge for ourselves. The fact which first strikes the reader of his pages is the extraordinary persistence with which he, and the other members of the Legation, went to teas (*ch'a hui*) and evening parties. Every lady in London seems to have opened her house to the welcome stran-

gers, and for several seasons they became well-established lions. Their first experience of dances was a revelation to them. The dresses of the ladies shocked them somewhat at first sight, but this soon wore off, and the writer of the diary compares favourably the appearance of English ladies, even with their bare necks and arms, with that of his own countrywomen. He admired the music, also, and remarks that, while in China the dance is the main thing attended to, in England music rules the ball. He is of opinion, too, after some months' experience, that the slow and inelastic movements of the solitary performers to which he had been accustomed are not to be compared to the rapid and combined gyrations of English dancers. On the whole, he considers a ball a sight well worth seeing; and he was particularly struck with the evident enjoyment of the dancers, whose gaiety and zest delighted him. He evidently ranks, in the spirit of a true Oriental, a *fan-se-po* (fancy ball) as inferior to an ordinary dance, though he was much amused at the dresses and the grotesque appearances of the performers.

Curiously enough, though English singing is as different from Chinese singing as the artillery band is from the bagpipes, he admired it greatly; and he speaks especially of a song, the title of which he gives as "Yenjan," which was sung at an afternoon party by a boy whose name is partly concealed under the transliteration

Chuwensen (? Johnson). But the full meed of admiration was reserved for the singing and dancing of a young lady named Alice at one of the music-halls, who in his own words "intoxicated her audience with delight." He does not—and here he is probably wise—give his opinion of the people he meets, and his remarks on his hosts and hostesses are scanty; but in one place he accords to a Mrs Kataerh, who entertained him at tea, the distinguished position of being the most accomplished lady in London. He allows us to see, however, when people bored him, for we meet with such entries as "So-and-so called and stayed a very long time"; and the difference between the entertainments which amused him and those which did not are sufficiently marked to leave no doubt on the subject. We meet, for instance, with such entries as "Went to an evening party at Mrs A.'s. Very few people. Came away early," and we can picture a failure from Chang's point of view. On the other hand, we hear of crowded rooms, bright dresses, and gay talk, and then we are quite sure to read at the end of the entry, "Went home late." Sometimes he makes mention of the suppers at which he took part; and he speaks, in one passage, with enthusiasm of the roast chicken and fried fish of which he partook at a house in *Pikatili* (Piccadilly).

Of our habits he writes at length for the benefit of his countrymen, and he enlarges

on the national traits which he has observed. He states, with an air of complaint, that, when we possess anything rare or precious, we have a way of showing it off to all visitors, and of insisting on their admiring it. He credits us, however, with being sincere. Englishmen, he says, "are not fond of idle talk; if they have a duty to perform, they devote themselves with diligence to it; if they have a binding engagement, they fulfil it to the letter of the law; the right and the wrong they discuss seriously, and painfully distinguish between them; they are willing to accept excuses; they are straightforward and honest; they do not make a pretence of diligence, and they do not assume a yielding attitude." And he sums us up in these words, "Altogether, sincerity is their ruling principle, and a man who is untruthful, and does not keep to his engagements, is regarded as having lost his respectability, and as having forfeited his good name. They may be said to be severe in passing sentence on themselves."

On several occasions we find by his diary that he benefited by the national honesty which he admires. Once he lost a fan in the streets, and was surprised by its being returned to him the next day. A more serious loss was that of a £20 note, which was returned to him by a lamplighter, whose honesty he rewarded by the gift of 10s. But what struck him most, at first sight, in coming to England, was the

contrariety in the habits of the two peoples. "In politics," he writes, "the people speak and the rulers listen." After reading the accounts of the Privy Councils over which the Dowager-Empress has lately presided, we can quite understand the difference between the two procedures in this respect striking him as strange and noticeable. "In domestic matters women lead and men follow; they write from left to right; their books begin at the end; at dinner they begin with soup and go on to meats; they eat heavy food before fruit; the seat of honour is on the right hand; they pay respect to the host and look comparatively lightly on the guests; at dinner the host sits in the middle and the guests arrange themselves on each side of him like wings; when they beckon a man they hold the palm of the hand upwards and move the index finger backwards and forwards." For these divergences from the ways and habits of his countrymen he has no explanation to offer except to say that they are due either to national propensities or to the fact that Englishmen are, unhappily for them, banished to the opposite end of the world to China.

From such matters he turns to the social relationships, and finds that modern extravagance is a serious impediment in the way of marriage, which, as a true Confucianist, he considers should be the first object of every human being. He tells his countrymen—but he does

not give us his authority—that an English lady spends ten times as much as a man. A single dress, he affirms, costs £10—a singularly modest estimate; the situation is aggravated by the fact that it is never worn more than twice. He is shocked at the idea that what with entertaining, carriages and horses, and household expenses, a lady gets through over £100 a-week! The result is that young ladies are obliged to reject every suitor who has not a long purse, and men are compelled to think twice before they make themselves responsible for the debts of these extravagant but attractive partners. Young ladies, we learn from him, leave matchmaking to their parents until they reach the age of twenty, after which age they choose their husbands for themselves with a free hand and a light heart. Into the household arrangements he enters at full length, and describes minutely the duties and habits of every rank of servant from the house-keeper to the scullion. He even explains to his countrymen the position of wet-nurses, and adds the statement—which will be news to us as well as to them—that these useful personages, who are chosen with the greatest care and after many inquiries, always join the family at meals.

Like a true Chinaman, he is fond of tracing habits and customs to that source of all knowledge—China. At a restaurant he saw people, in very hot weather, sucking up cool drinks through straws, and he is

straightway reminded of the celebrated Wei Chêng-kung, who, under similar circumstances, rolled up a lily-leaf into the shape of a funnel, and drew his wine through it. He was told that a certain princess having scratched her cheek, applied a piece of black sticking-plaster to it, and that in consequence it became fashionable for ladies to wear patches. This calls to his recollection a story of a beautiful lady of the Court of the Emperor Wu-ti, who on one occasion was standing on a verandah of the palace when a petal from a plum-blossom fell on her cheek, and adhered so firmly that she was unable to wash it off. This set the fashion, and for a time no lady was thought to be “quite the thing” who did not wear plum-blossom-coloured patches on her face. He witnessed some of the earlier attempts to light the streets with electricity, and he would have been more astonished at the brilliancy of the lamps had he not remembered a description of an equally bright illumination in ‘The Records of the Western Capital.’ The Marquis Tsêng, who succeeded Kuo at the Court, used to quote a passage from the Chinese classics to prove that Confucius was acquainted with the principles of the electric telegraph; and Sir Robert Hart has lately more than suggested that fifty years ago a governor of Canton not only understood the principle of the phonograph, but employed the instrument!

The popular customs of the

people are never-failing sources of interest to our diarist, and he gives, among others, a long description of the rites of St Valentine. On that saint's day, he writes, all young people pretend to be in love. Formerly, he adds, it used to be the habit of companies of youths and maidens to meet in equal numbers on the day. To each was given a piece of paper, and when he or she had inscribed his or her name on it, it was put into an urn with the rest. When the papers had been well mixed up each drew a name, and if a youth and maiden drew each other's names, they were free to marry without the intervention of parents or "go-betweens." Now, we learn, this custom has been given up, and instead the young people interchange love-letters, which are to be bought at shops, and in which, though the phrases are conventional, there is considerable elegance of diction! These are illustrated also. For instance, a young man is represented under a scorching sun offering a fan to a young lady and saying, "The day is hot, and if there is no fan there can be no air. If you will kindly use this, what happiness!"

Personally the diarist has nothing but good to say of the British citizen, though he relates one instance in which a friend was attacked in the street by a drunken man. But he adds, to the credit of the bystanders, that they instantly seized the offender and handed him over to the police. As a

natural consequence the prosecutor had to give evidence the next day in the police-court, and the question arose how he was to be sworn. It is a popular belief that in Chinese courts of justice the oath is administered by the witness breaking a plate or saucer, and at the same time expressing a fervent wish that the same fate may overtake him if he does not speak the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. It was proposed, on this occasion, that this course should be followed, and though it was entirely strange to him, he was advised by the interpreter to fall in with the proposal. Chang explained for the benefit of his countrymen that this form means that if the witness had not spoken the truth he would have been *paid out after twelve o'clock*. But though Chang did not meet with any aggressive discourtesy in the streets, the boys did occasionally call after him. Once, he tells us, some urchins on seeing him shouted out, "*Wo, Aima!*" (*Wo, Emma!*) and, with the love of explaining dark passages which is strong in him, he goes on to say that *Wo* is an exclamation, and *Aima* a girl's name. To make it quite clear, he adds that a young lady of that name having had a mare given her christened it after herself, and meeting with a friend on the road, was met by the exclamation, "*Wo, Aima!*" Hence the expression, which, according to Chang, is indicative of pleasure. Such shouts as "*Chin, chin, Chainieze!*" (*Chin, chin,*

Chinese!) was common in his experience.

Altogether, he is favourably impressed by Western peoples; and he quotes a saying which, roughly speaking, satisfies him as a description of the various nationalities. "There is nothing," so runs his proverb, "which an American won't say; there is nothing that an Englishman won't eat; there is nothing that an Italian won't sing; there is no measure to which a Frenchman won't dance; and there is nothing Russians don't covet." Possibly he considers that there may be some connection between the trait here attributed to Englishmen and the complaint which he describes as *kota* (gout), and to which, according to him, we are victims. It attacks, he states, the glutinous and wine-bibbers, and begins in the big toes, and eventually ends in death. With a strangely confused diagnosis he considers that this complaint resembles leprosy in China,—possibly he means by its fatal results.

In return for all the hospitality shown him and his staff, the Minister proposed to give a *soirée*, and, in course of conversation with Chang on the subject, suggested that Madam Kuo should receive the guests. Such a procedure would be, of course, contrary to all Chinese ideas of propriety; for did not Confucius lay it down as a rule that a man must not even hand anything to a lady, lest their hands should touch? And here it was proposed that the Minister's wife should shake hands

with every man who came in response to the invitation! Chang was not straitlaced, but even he held up his hands in horror, and further explained that such a proceeding would give a whip-hand to Kuo's enemies at Peking, who would be sure to get hold of the story and magnify its importance. But the Minister was not to be balked of his purpose. The invitations were issued, and a most delightful evening was enjoyed by the guests. Shortly after, however, the Minister was recalled, and at the time it was commonly reported that, as Chang had foreseen, the party and the recall were cause and effect. But it is plain from Chang's diary that Kuo considered that there was another contributing cause.

It seems that on one occasion Liu, the Assistant Minister, visited a picture-gallery, where he saw a portrait of the Madonna, which he admired extremely and would have bought, had not the price, £70, been too much for him. In the struggle between his desires and his pocket he struck a middle course, and engaged an artist to make a copy of the picture. The result having been satisfactory, it was arranged that the same artist should paint a portrait of the Minister Kuo. This also was deemed a good picture, as was shown by the fact that it was exhibited at the Royal Academy of that year. There had apparently been some little misunderstanding about the price paid for the second picture, though nothing was said about it, and matters went smoothly

until reports, emanating from native newspapers in China, concerning incidents connected with the sittings for Kuo's portrait, appeared in the London press. These were to the effect that Kuo had been unreasonable in his demands. That he had declined, on account of press of business, to sit more than twice, the artist having been expected to do the main part of his work from a photograph. The attitude to be assumed was also represented as having been a crux. Kuo, it was said, insisted on both his ears appearing in the portrait, lest people should think that he had committed some political crime for which he had suffered the loss of one at the hand of the executioner. He made it a *sine quâ non* that the button on the top of his cap and his peacock's feather trailing from it should be fully depicted; but as the first was concealed by the upturned brim of the cap, and the feather was at the back, the artist declared his inability to comply. Upon which the Minister lowered his head to his knees and asked whether he could not see the button and feather then. "Yes," was the reply, "but now I can't see your Excellency's face." To the artist's suggestion that he should be painted in his court robes, he objected on the ground that Englishmen, seeing so gorgeous an apparition, would always be

kotowing before it. With the final result, however, the Minister is said to have been so pleased that he invited the same artist to paint a portrait of Mrs Kuo. The paragraphs in the newspapers embodying these statements came to Kuo's knowledge while he was visiting Paris. He at once wrote to contradict them, and believing that the artist was their author, sent to him to inquire whether this were so or not. The fact that these rumours appeared in a native paper in Shanghai in the course of the 6th month, and that his recall was telegraphed from Peking in the 8th month, giving time for the transmission of the rumours to reach the capital, and to have their effect, convinced Kuo that his enemies at Court had seized on these most un-mandarin-like proceedings to successfully discredit him in the eyes of the Son of Heaven.

About the same time a telegram reached Chang announcing that his father was dangerously ill, and begging him to return to China at once. With all haste he obeyed the summons, and happily found his father yet alive. This episode brings to a close the diary, which, if it were written in English instead of Chinese, would find a large public greedy to devour its gossip and interesting pages.

THE CONQUEST OF CHARLOTTE.¹

PART II.—THE HAPPY ISLANDS.

CHAPTER IX.—THE PLAYGROUND OF ROMANCE.

RAB'S house stood, as I have said, at the harbour end of St Brise, on the north side of the High Street, at a point where there were no houses to speak of on the south side, but a clear slope to the sea, whereby, from the windows of the tenements opposite, and especially from Rab's windows at the very skyline, you get a wide sweep of the Firth mouth. From where he met me to his house was a step only, and we made it without further interchange of words. With a light hand on my shoulder he turned me into a close, and again, half-way down it, upon a steep and winding stone stair, at the very top of which, when we reached it, a flat brown door faced us. Into this he let us with a latch, and, still with his light and friendly touch upon my shoulder, set me on a sofa in a room overlooking the sea.

In passing through the lobby on our way thither he had called his wife, and now she came on his summons.

"An auld friend, Charlotte," he said in the same tone of voice as when he was charming me; but, I declare, at sight of the woman, just in presence of honest folk, I seemed to detect a false ring in his words.

"David Shirra, Janet Seton's

cuisin in the Bowes," she said, giving me a hand of recognition with a fine grace.

"And yours, if I may count our cousinship," I answered, emboldened by some heat of affection for the woman.

(For all my delight in Rab I had never counted my connection with him.)

"And that's well minded," he cried. "... although ... my wife's coming to the Setons, in the manner of it allowed me to forget."

It was plainly meant for a buffet to the woman, and she took it without shrinking. It made my blood run quicker in me; the tremor in her eye sent the last of my regard for him flying.

With a flash of intuition I burst out, "We are all very proud of our cousin."

I suppose it was a thing as strange for me to say as it was untrue, and very uncomfortable for them to hear; but I felt it, and did not know how to hide my feeling or the wisdom of doing so. At any rate, they took their eyes off each other to look at me: Charlotte with a surprised smile, and Rab with that diabolical twitter of his.

"Whaur's the lassie?" he cried suddenly; and then, clear-

¹ Copyright, 1901, by Dodd, Mead, & Co., in the United States of America.

ly between his teeth, "She's more o' an age"—meaning for me to show affection for, I suppose, my affection for the elder Charlotte showing itself plainly now.

"Charlotte!" he cried, going to the door.

And upon his bidding came my Charlotte.

I have told already how I met her at the Back Bowes, and was measured with her back to back to my humiliation. But now she was changed and I was changed. For whereas at the Back Bowes she came to me with a shyness from behind her mother, with a look to her mother's face half of inquiry and half only of sympathetic knowing, and edged off from her father more from instinctive prejudice than from reasoned contempt, now it was a woman almost who filled the doorway, so greatly had she grown, and she brushed aside Rab with scarce a glance at him, shook me by the hand, and then taking her mother's arm, kept it while she sat beside her on the sofa. And I too was changed, and in more than my years, as a burst in my blood discovered for me. For beyond the look in the two women's eyes, less furtive and doubtful than that which arrested me at the Bowes, I saw the girl's great beauty. The salt bloom of the sea was on her cheek, on which her grey and profound eye lay like a window into another world. She was taller than I by half a head now and longer limbed, and in that as in all things, save the gently swelling bust, like her

mother. Only to me who noted these things then, although not fully conscious of them until long afterwards, it seemed as if upon the sunburnt face and the grey eyes there lay a cloud not shadowing the mother's. Yet her mother's bore the marks of Rab's buffeting as clearly as if he had raised a hand against her, which he never did. . . .

There, his eye on them and on me, and on the bay beyond as well, was this little supple man, with the wind in his cheek, making his low twittering. Remember, I was young, a mere boy, like any chick that has broken his shell, emerged from my plain and even nursery of life, and susceptible to every appeal of beauty or of joy or pain!

It was almost with a sob that I stepped to the side of the elder Charlotte, and "I am glad to meet you" said to both of them.

From that day to this, I can swear, the memory of that moment has scarce ever left me, or the thought of Charlotte, my Charlotte, been absent from my mind. . . .

"Your hat, Chat," says Rab, "and take the cuisin who's so glad to meet you down to see the shore."

"Yes, . . . go," said her mother. And when the girl was gone for her hat—"Are you staying here some time?"

I told her for a year or more.

"Then maybe you'll come along—" she stopped short, glancing uneasily at Rab.

"Tuts, ay," he said, looking round; but his wife in a

sudden heat and pain quitted the room.

Of this encounter, the meaning of which was made plainer to me later, as it will be to you, I thought no more; nor of anything save the girl, who had returned dressed to go out, and took me under her wing very frankly when, having descended to the street and crossed it, we came out upon the beach, and I looked for the first time upon the broad expanse of the ocean.

Thus it fell out that it was Charlotte who sped me forward upon my happy boyhood's season spent on that grey shore. Inland from where Aunt Sarah dwelt, upon the bluff that rose sheer from the breaking waves, were fields and woods; burns that babbled of quiet and uneventful life; billowy lands, comfortable in a regular succession of the seasons, — summer played against the winter, spring against the autumn; farm towns entrenched for the winter within full stackyards (their savings-banks against the evil day), and in the spring's displenishment flanked with credit, their fortunes out at no venture save the hazard of the total and complete default of Nature, to be thought of only with the end of all things.

For us boys, or most of us, at Foster's school, set high on the landward side of the town, that was our environment for six days of the week, counted by us in Jewish style; but on the first and holiday, how different! On the morning of

that day, as on other mornings, we awoke upon a falling glass: the pressure of the daily round, enforced by a very stinging cane, lay somewhat heavily upon our spirits. The verity of our freedom did not steal upon us like the dawn athwart the eastern headlands, but plumped into our consciousness with tropic wonder. The day peeped through the striped blinds upon our unwillingness, and suddenly some associate quality in it proclaimed a holiday, sending a stound of joy to the heart. If it happened that no adventure was on hand, we lay abed in ecstasical luxury, and curling up afresh chewed the cud of our freedom. But that was seldom. More often the tryst was awaiting us: the paraphernalia of the day's doings, prepared overnight, called aloud from the abuse of the housemaid; and we scorned our bed as unbecoming heroes. I remember that if the sun shone doubtfully, I pulled aside the blind with my heart in my mouth at fear of the rain-cloud: shine the sun never so surely, I would pull it aside with a simulated dread. In the grip of the imagination, I cherished the fear of foul weather, and in default of good cause for looking at the sun said, as I looked, that all adventurers keep an eye upon the heavens.

I had gone to bed, maybe, with a purpose of putting on in the morning a garb harvested from many fields of enterprise. In a little pile at my bed-foot, ready against

my awakening, were a bushy, a brodered cartouche-box, a cutlass, and an ancient pruning-knife stuck through the pocket of a sporran that was to hang with the hairy side against my thigh. These were placed conspicuously under the eye of my Aunt Sarah (when she came to hear me say my prayers), hostages for her approval of a more comprehensively piratical garb I had in view, which included a pair of the late Provost Trail's blucher boots (to be worn without stockings), his special-constable baton, and a hard and weather-stained cape in which he was used to go loch-fishing. Even Aunt Sarah, however, had the wisdom to say nothing, knowing that in the morning, of my own accord, I should discard all save the baton and the pruning-knife. The other villains whom I met at the tryst also were singularly moulted of the feathers announced for the occasion. All of us wore the uniform of a certain diabolical air; our only agreement otherwise was the plenitude of candles we carried. There was, too, a crouch in our gait, borrowed from Red Indians on the trail. On that shore we might fall in with treasure and virtue from the South Seas to Lake Huron, and in consequence our bloody intentions and methods ranged from the Iroquois to the Atchinese. To declare these to the townsfolk, no badge or ensign was required: any man who had been a St Brise boy (and no other counted) could read the meaning of the circlings and

cawings of our flock upon the shore. How many greybeards have not followed us with rejuvenescent eyes from high overlooking windows as we turned our backs on the landward parts, and set our faces to the sea,—now blue and shimmering, now rough-ridden with white horses; at times breaking good-humouredly with the spring-tide, at others lashing the rocks and the outlying breakwater and the piles (the second line of defence), and even the storm gables that on the swelling breast of the shore withstood it; once more, at ebb, beating itself out far down the beach, like an angry child, with no force behind its passion, or rippling sweetly,—always the plaything of circumstance, uncontrolled apparently, yet strictly controlled by hidden laws, and so for me now the figure and token of life!

The grey shore was stretched like a slack line at the mercy of the wind between three harbours as poles, that of St Brise in the centre. It stretched outwards, beyond Torrie Town in the east and the Ferry on the west, girding a romantic country, and gathered up at close and irregular intervals at other similar stakes; but the portion between these two harbours was our holiday ground. I daresay, could I bring myself to think of it as an ordinary piece of earth, I could calculate within a hundred yards of its extent. Prick it off upon the Ordnance Survey to a boat's length, if you care! I do not: for me it defies computation by the

ordinary means of reckoning. You cannot pace it, or account its size by the time it takes to traverse it. As we covered it then, a forenoon saw us barely on our way from St Brise to one or other harbour. We never compassed Torrie Town but we returned in the dusk; and then, somewhat ignominiously, by the safer high-road, upon which we contrived to cast romantic beams from two inches of tallow set in a yellow turnip head of grinning countenance. . . . In St Brise harbour there lay considerable craft—timber brigs for America, and a whaler or two, besides dirty smacks and sloops be-daubed with merchandise. The eastern and more picturesque basin at Torrie always held, I know not why, vessels of a cleaner, more foreign and more romantic aspect. So Torrie was our chief goal; yet turning our backs upon the bustle of St Brise was a tardy business. Between the two, on this side the bay where Charlotte Seton met the blackavised man, was set a brown and hoary ruin, to be reached, as Charlotte reached it, by way of a deep sandy inlet fringed with trees. Save when the tide was full back, access to this castle from any but the landward side was barred by the rocky ridge on which it stood. This ridge, running with a slow gradient from the water, barred the way always for dry feet, for the tail of it was never quite uncovered by the tide: it barred the way straitly when the sea came up under the castle walls. In that case, the

climb or scramble, always stiff, became an adventure: once accomplished, and the castle stormed, the height of glory was reached. The musty tunnels, once living rooms perchance of the lovely Rosabelle, held no treasure for us. We forgot Rosabelle in the ascent of the rocks which she descended. Not that we were untouched by historic memories. They were in our blood. In some dim way we knew our inheritance from the grim, boisterous, big, daft race that had lived and fought on this shore. They were more intimate than our father and mother and their generation: too intimate we felt, with the pride and instinct for reserve of youth, for curious reminiscence. There was a quality in their associations that kept them unspoken—kept them for mention in later and less sensitive days, as here, when the memory of the reminiscence gives it an air. The common shared romances of these days were such as we took visible part in,—the meeting of waves (which scarce could wet our knees) with a desperate front, as if, but for that, they had swept us off our feet; the storming of rocks, twice our own height, maybe, become mountains by our resolute bearing; the exploration of caves, where 'deed were no caves, but candles only wherewith to explore such: selfish perils, selfish joys, created on this rocky coast each seventh day of our existence in this unromantic town of St Brise.

And yet, not entirely devoid

of romance. I have spoken of the dull, colourless villa-quarter on the bluff, living whereon was not of our own determination but of our fathers' (or of our fathers' sisters'), who had damped down their romantic furnaces. I have often praised their lives. Often since then, I confess it, I have been tempted to account them the wisest; and, but for one woman, had made them my world. Nay, they may have been the best and the wisest: yet I would, if I could, for her sake forget their pattern. . . . That one fantastic day in seven was feeble antidote to the mortal moderation of the remaining six. Still, even for us who lived upon the bluff, there was saving grace. The harbours were inviolable sanctuaries of Romance. In the cluster of buildings around them the smell of ships remained: hanging with a marked fishy flavour about the doors and closes in the wynds; lying incrustated on the storm gables with the brine from the North Sea. It seems to me now that that smell, and a smack of seafaring in the pavement gossip, and the glimpse of masts and rigging at the far ends of the wynds and closes, and especially the greeting of one decrepit sea-captain, who flung it at you as if in the teeth of a blustering gale, did redeem the little town. . . . They were the meanest doors in it that opened for us upon the big, wide world. You went down a close, as down Rab's, and ascended tall winding stairs to the top of the land, and there entry was given upon a floor whose front windows

looked upon the basin, and over the ships in it to the Firth's mouth beyond. Such were the homes of women, for the most part; of mothers and sisters grown old in single faithfulness to those whose drownings are unchronicled. I can hear them now talk wonderfully of the "boys" at 'Frisco or in the China Seas. Dear souls! They thought we wearied at their tales, yet they prattled on, to please themselves, not dreaming of the wonderful visions raised by their words, nor dreaming either of the awe with which, when their ships came home, we shook hands with the "boys" themselves—grey sea-dogs, red of face, bluff of speech, and tender of heart as I read them in the regard of their womankind.

These were the portals under which on occasion we passed to the glorious unknown. Sometimes it was discussed for us on the Bluff Genteel (God forgive Aunt Sarah!) whether it were right to condescend under them. The Provost's grandson was somebody, though his mother had thrown herself away upon an exciseman. . . . Pity me! Were I to speak truth, there was not in most dwellers on shore or on Bluff one romantic attribute to cast into the scale against the commonplace of both. No native attribute, at any rate, but Circumstance only, gilded the life in these harbour tenements. No longer adventure, but the dingiest commerce, stuffed their heads. Yet, such their happy circumstance, the palaver they wrapped about their bits of

bargainings ran on far-off terrifying coasts and sunny island harbours; their ledgers and "books" came home to rest beside ship-models. In the corners of their living-rooms, museums of their fathers' and a bygone day, there lay wonderful trophies: an emu's egg (so it was declared), Chinese junks fashioned in white ivory, cabinets of sweet-smelling woods mounted with arabesque design, a lump of crystal of strange properties of destruction, and many more, retaining for them and for us, poor land-locked grubbers, the echo of Romance, like the shells on landward mantelpieces giving back the song of the sea.

That first sight of the sea, with Charlotte, went a little to my head, giddy already with unaccustomed sensations.

"Charlotte!" I cried. "I wish that I lived in a house on the High Street, high up like you, and could look out here always."

She gave me a quick glance.

"We see plenty of the sea," she said, and was quiet.

By-and-by, however, her silent mood broke in a brisk patter of words. She had not yet found her fine voice: that discovery was made years later by Richard Clephane's friend, Mr Parabo; but even as a girl she had her father's other gift of talk. Before we turned at the west of the town, I seemed to have been at Foster's school already. In her company I felt as if St Brise had been my home, as if I was one of the Cook family. I should have

known her brothers, even those whom I had never seen, had I met them: the black boy, Robin, whom I had seen at the Bowes, who was to be a sailor, and never was out of a boat, between here and Torrie Town; and Dave, who was her own particular brother; and James, the best scholar, who was to be a minister when he grew up; and Tam, the cleverest company, who kept rabbits and guinea-pigs, and was the image of his father. I saw them all in that dark saying of Mr Trail about fine threads and coarse threads making a queer web, which she lit up by her talk.

And when we had turned, and faced the Firth mouth, and I was gasping almost at losing the firm boundary of the world about me at that point, she told me about the magic of the sky-line. Her talk, I know now, was made up of bits of Rab's glamorous conversation, polished by the friction of her own fancy. . . . The sea, she said, was a witch, and her wand was the vanishing sky-line she held in her hand. And if you looked at her too long, she would cast a spell over you with this wand, and from that minute you could never be happy out of sight of her. Her father said he was bewitched by her one half-moon night when he was a laddie in Eben Smith's shop, . . . "and that's why he's never happy at the Bowes." . . . And if the sea wave her wand for you to come, you maun go, though you never rest by a fireside again.

"I've heard father tell," she

said, "of shepherds leaving their hills, and gay young lads their fathers' bein houses i' the heart o' Fife, because the sea called them. There was a kind of cousin of his own, a young lassie, he said, who sat looking at the sea on her road to the kirk, and was bewitched, and had to walk by the kirk and into the sea, for it made her; but what happened to her I cannot tell, for mother heard father telling us the story and bade him stop, for it was over sad for my ears. . . . Our Robin's bewitched: he's just waiting till Cocked-Hat Nicholson's ship is ready, and he'll be off. Mother will not hear of it, but father says you might as well try to stop a swallow when it's restless in the back-end of the year. . . . When that wonderful boat of Nicholson's is ready, we're all going to sail together with Robin to the Happy Islands."

"Where are the Happy Islands?" I asked her.

"Where were they? Nobody knew, save those who were bewitched by the sea. But they, sometimes, would see them, always at the setting of the sun; and if once you sailed for them you never come back, but must keep sailing, sailing till you find them, . . . and once you find them, you live on in them for ever, and never think of leaving, for the sea is always blue, and the sun is always shining. . . . Tam said that in the Happy Islands it was always like a Saturday on the St Brise shore, but James thought it maun be finer than that even, for he

had read of it in the Revelations, and St Brise isn't mentioned there." . . .

In this cloud of magic nonsense we returned along the shore. When we reached the street, near her own close-door, Charlotte suddenly relapsed into her quiet and matter-of-fact mood, and so bade me good-night; but my mind, that ever worked more slowly than hers, was still groping its way to an issue.

"Charlotte," I said, "I would like to go up with you to your windows and look for the Happy Islands."

Without a word she led the way.

"Mother," she cried, "I've brought David Shirra back with me. He wants to look for the Happy Islands, . . . as if he could ever see them!"

"Maybe not," says the elder Charlotte, "very likely not, but there's pleasure in the looking for them."

The three of us were standing by the window, against which the mast-tops in the harbour were coming close in the waning light; and they were pointing out to me the landmarks on the coast, when Rab slipped in like a cold wind.

"You on the look-out like me," he said to Aunt Charlotte (as I got to call her from about this time); and as she interposed suddenly with "Here's David Shirra——"

"Huts! I saw him," he went on. "Helping you to watch for my ship coming home?"

Aunt Charlotte said nothing. "A ship of your own, maybe," he continued, drumming on the

pane; and I, not knowing the poison in that stab, says—

“The Happy Islands!”

“Mr Cook,” I cried, “the Firth mouth points to the North Sea, does it not?”

“Straight as a crow flies to Norway,” he says.

“Then how can there be islands out there? . . . Charlotte says you told her there were islands there, but that cannot be, for they’re not on the map.”

Rab laughed.

“Did Charlotte tell you, when she was at it, if any one ever found them? No. Then how could they be on the map, Mr Scholard? Eh! . . . And yet they’re there, Dauvid, if you have the eyes to see them. It all depends on that. On that. It happens we are a family with particular fine eyes. I can see things out there that many folk that you ken well would give their all to see, but cannot—and yet it is their business. You’ll notice about our family, if you condescend to keep up an acquaintance so auspiciously started this day,—you’ll notice a habit of ours of always looking out to sea. . . . I have a laddie, Robin, now, who at this moment is keeping a very bright watch on that same Firth mouth that leads to Norway, but likewise leads to some braw ports in France and the Low Countries if you take it the winning way.”

My eyes were glued on the man, fascinated. His talk was like a balloon, always straining

upwards, and always tied to earth.

Aunt Charlotte gave a little scared look out of the window.

“Rab,” said she, warningly.

“As dull as a peat,” answered Rab.

“Is it Cocked-Hat Nicholson’s ship he is looking for?” I asked. “Charlotte told me about it.”

“Charlotte told you a great deal in a short time,” he said very sharply. And then he fell back on his soft patter again. “No, Dauvid,” he said, “when I speak of our straining our eyes from this housetop watching for our ship, I am speaking in parables, and with parables it’s aye safest to leave the explanation of them to choice. . . . If ever you hear o’ my ship coming home, you’ll ken it’s not Charlotte’s here”—he nodded towards his wife. . . . “Mine sails deep in the waist. Hers is of a more flee-away, phantom kind.”

“David,” Aunt Charlotte calls suddenly, “it’s time you were away home.”

“Maybe that’s true,” says Rab with a laugh, turning a spy-glass out to sea; and Aunt Charlotte and the girl saw me to the door.

On my road homewards, with the sun setting in my face, I looked down the sea-wynd to catch, if I could, a glimpse of the Happy Islands. They were not to be seen; but that night in my dreams the sea-witch waved her wand, and Charlotte and Robin and I stood out in the Firth mouth for them in Cocked-Hat Nicholson’s boat.

CHAPTER X.—SCHOOLS OF CONDUCT.

If any one supposes from this that we St Brise boys and girls dwelled in sentimental hothouses, he never was at Foster's school. In St Brise everywhere the air is sharp and caller; at Foster's it was stinging. In St Brise, it is when you have fought the sea-winds to a place of shelter that you taste the salt they have left upon your lips; and it was only later, at quiet anchorages like Mr Michael Trail's law-office, that we were conscious of a romantic bloom upon our tempestuous school-days. The boy-and-girl stuff brought to Foster's mill was for the most part very sound and ordinary, able to bear the rough polishing it got. When there was put through it any of a more delicate, softer fibre, it was spoiled for ever in the passage. I do not say that that was not a pity; but I know that in the main Foster's school was a fine manufactory of men and women. The master had a cane, and it discriminated broadly. We might study or we might idle; we did the one or the other, counting the cost. In the hand of that small, wiry, ironical man, the rod was scarce a moral instrument. Justice, I believe, entered little into its exercise, whereas the humours of the master did greatly. Nevertheless it was moral in its effect, making for righteousness in the community. Those who escaped it were studious, by nature or from fear, and to such only was application to learning of

great use. Most of us were to pass into the affairs of life in which some sharpness of wits, a sound discernment, and not too sensitive hearts and hands, were to be of more avail than the learning of the schools; and all these came to us from the cane or the avoidance of it. I can imagine no more virtuous training than that of taking that casual cane as the type of all the ills of life, meted out to us by circumstance, and not in proportion to our merit; to be cheerfully borne, and as cheerfully ignored. . . . A stranger to the town, I remember, hailed David Cook, one of Charlotte's brothers, and pointing to the school, asked, "Is this the Town Hall?" "Nay, sir," David answered, "it is the slaughter-house." In that mood we took it, save, now and then, when an unusual pith in the master's elbow or a touch of frost in the air drove the very last speck of its gaiety from our finger-bones. And in some such gay mood, to be just, the master gave it, unless it were meant to arrest the spoiling of a lad with possibilities of Latinity in front of him. In any case it was good training for a man.

Such was the factory to which Aunt Sarah brought me—a very raw piece of material—on the day succeeding my walk on the St Brise shore. Charlotte's chatter, then, had I heard it with understanding, would have prepared me for the kind of working-up that was before me; and might have dis-

covered for me, too, that a hardy discipline was engendered in the girls, as well as a healthy sentiment in both, by making the boys their vicarious whipping-posts. But, in truth, Aunt Sarah must have driven that discovery out of my head, if ever it had been in it, for she marched me up to the school in a skirl of moral maxims that filled me with a poor spirit for the encounter.

The outer aspect of the building, I remember, was singularly gracious: within the portico the sun was playing sweetly, and there was a twittering of swallows about a nest high up in the entablature. In the inner porch everything was still. No hum came from beyond the brown door where we stood now, and a more enlightened scholar than myself must have found the silence ominous. Ignorant as I was, however, the sound that broke it presently would have carried conviction to my finger-tips, even had I not happened upon a way of conviction by the evidence of my eyes. Aunt Sarah was smoothing her gloves before knocking, and preening herself with various dainty motions, and in that moment of relaxation I discovered that a knot had been removed from the door-panel, affording me, just at the level of my nose, a peep-hole upon the mysteries I was about to enter. To this I warily applied an eye of natural curiosity, endeavouring the while to keep another eye upon Aunt Sarah—for I was quite conscious of the “unlady-like” nature of the enterprise.

In this uneasy focus, I was wonderfully successful. The flash of the cane, indeed, beat me, but I caught a glimpse of a ragged head bent upon a flinching shoulder, and a dirty paw held up for its punishment—all so appealing, as it seemed to me, that the sound of the contact reached my ears with the poignant conviction to which I have referred. Aunt Sarah was one of those silly-talking, heartless women whom men in a heat are apt to call by a hot word. The sound, if she heard it, did not interrupt her titivations for a second; on observing which, I returned to my spy-hole. What I saw now was a body of ragged coat and hair doubled up in an access of agony, which I came to know later was one of the most finished exhibitions of the art known to that generation at Foster’s.

Its effect upon me was so fascinating that it glued my eye to the peep-hole; and not a motion of the whole diorama escaped me. The three or four rows of heads between me and the principal performers appeared to be fixed in an attitude of awed fascination like my own; only there was a cock of the ears which I did not understand then, but now know to have been critical. The performance was played somewhat in the fashion of a mill—not that I knew much about a mill; but there are natural instincts, and by one of them I guessed that here, too, were breathing-spaces between the short sharp work of the rounds, and by another that

the combatant in the gown, with the cane in his hand and the cold amusement on his face, had the calling of time at his own discretion, and that the bundle would have to come up to it, willy-nilly. Indeed, I was aware that he had called it, when Aunt Sarah, her titivations over, observed what I was doing, and made so sudden a descent upon me that my head gave the double rap upon the door for which she had been all the time smoothing her knuckles. "David!" she cried; but her reproachful piping was drowned in a roar of "Door!" that rolled up on the other side of it, and already the step of the executioner was approaching. Aunt Sarah fell back upon smoothing her ruffled feathers. I, on the other hand, was still in a vain flurry when I found myself face to face with Mr Foster, not knowing very well whether I stood upon my head or upon my feet, but conscious that in the opening and shutting of the door I had seen the lately agonised bundle playing a tarradoodle behind the Master's back, with ten fingers extended in front of swarthy features that were none other than those of my old acquaintance of the Back Bowes, young Robin Cuick.

A pair of bright eyes shot down on me through spectacles set upon a fine, sensitive nose. The mouth was firm and shrewd. The head was well poised upon shoulders that had the student's stoop, and from them fell a black gown enveloping the short slim figure. The little cloth cap upon the

bald brows crowned the Master with awe in my eyes. Such a figure was new to me. Mr Butler, whose school I attended at Town-of-Tarvit, was, I have heard since, a more precise Latinist, but he hobnobbed in inns and elsewhere with wags and broken men, and was a battered coin in the currency of Town-of-Tarvit conversation. Mr Foster looked a gentleman and a scholar; and Aunt Sarah, I remember, rose in my regard through the easy familiarity of her interview with him. Aunt Sarah was a siccar, clever woman.

The Master opened the door of the schoolroom, upon which a sudden hush had fallen, and led us through it to a little room, in which a table still stood, ready for the receipting of fees and the like.

"Our poor Grace's child" was still on her lips—that damned refrain which I was to hear on them for years. "He's been lost in Town-o'-Tarvit. He needs your treatment."

She said this with a snigger, an indecent snigger, towards the schoolroom.

"Madam," answered he, "it's one that has been well tried. The Roman schoolmaster had his disciplinary sign at his door. . . . Manured with beating like a walnut-tree, . . . we'll make a man of him," said the Dominie, patting my shoulder.

"And a gentleman," says Aunt Sarah.

"That, madam, is in God's hands," he answered, clipping his words, as his way was, that I hear in my ears still.

"I tell him he must not forget his grandfather," Aunt Sarah continued.

"I am sure, madam, that you will not allow him to forget him."

There was, I could have been certain, a ring of sarcasm in the words, but there was no correspondence to it in his looks when I met his eye.

Aunt Sarah picked my fees from her purse, and there was some talk of a whist-party at which they had met recently, or were to meet, and she was shown out of the schoolroom, and I to my seat in the class. Young Robin Cook had disappeared from his place in the centre of the floor, and by-and-by, when my eye wandered from the map on the black-board from which the Dominie had resumed his lesson in geography, it fell upon Robin's face some seats off, grinning at me in the lee of his neighbour's shoulder in the most hideous contortions to which he could attain with his fingers and thumbs in mouth and eye-sockets. At first he showed circumspection in shooting his grimaces at me; but finding that he was successful in arresting me he gave himself up to an abandonment of distortion.

"Roberte, what was the last word?"

At the Master's word, Robertus eased his head into its proper place, his face assuming a look of unconscious attention.

"The last word, Roberte!"

Robertus did not appear to hear.

The Master was round at him with his cane poised.

"Didn't you hear me ask you the last word?" he said.

"Roberte isn't my name. My name's Robin."

"Then Robin, kindly step out here till I have a few words with you."

There was a little affair of six rounds on the matter of the last word.

That over: "I think, Robin," he said, "we weren't quite finished with our interview when I was called to the door to receive Mr David Shirra, here."

There were a few more rounds to rectify that.

In returning to his seat, Robin, blowing his hands fiercely, passed me, and set me in a flutter with a hoarse whisper—

"My man, wait till I get you outside."

The lesson proceeded, with me in a state of cold trepidation. I stole furtive glances at Robin. He was too wary now, in his stalking of the last word, to divert his eye upon me; but he seemed to feel mine fall upon him, and met it behind his neighbour with a clenched fist that worked up and down with so purposeful a menace that I almost felt it already about my ribs.

The lesson was in geography, but I knew little more than that; only the echo of the Master's words about the Antilles may have lingered in my brain, petrified by Robin's intimidation.

"What was I speaking about, David Shirra?" came the Master's sharp voice.

The sound of my name, and the thought of the retribution

that seemed to follow here the missing of the last word, thawed my petrification, and in a rush of ideas I blurted out—

"The Happy Islands."

It was, as I know now, a happy hit, and surprised the Master into a delight.

"*Nos manet Oceanus circumvagus arva beata.*

*Petamus arva divites et insulas,
Reddit ubi Cererem tellus inarata quot-annis*

*Et inputata floret usque vinea,
Germinat et numquam fallentis termes olivæ*

*Suamque pulla ficus ornat arborem,"*¹

he quoted.

"Who told you of the Happy Islands?" he asked, with a curiosity, I think, for the Town-of-Tarvit tutor who had instructed me so well. So I understand now; but then, being delicate and green—

"If you please, sir, it was Charlotte Cook: Charlotte Cook told me about them last night on the sands."

A twinkle shone in Mr Foster's eye as he sought out Charlotte, where she hung a rosy face under all eyes.

"I didn't know Dame Cook was such a scholar," he said.

That sudden flash of poetry in Mr Foster, illumining the sordid round of his schoolmastering, was like the crimson burst at long years' interval upon the cactus-plant, charging his prickliness for me with incipient tenderness. It was my first glimpse of the Humanities. In all that

afternoon's experience there was some thrilling quality that graved it on my memory. I suppose that the encounter of the previous night and the mere novelty of being entered at Foster's had shaken me, and to my consequent elevation of spirit the ornament of Life made its appeal.

The school was dismissed, and from that high moment my spirit fell to the earth. Instinct had warned me already that by that public association with a girl in a day-dream I was lowered in the eyes of my fellows: and so it was. Robin Cook issued no more provocative challenges from that minute, but passed me by, like a mastiff that is content to sniff at a cur, and his complacency hurt me as his fists about my features could not have done. I was wounded in spirit, and I was not given by active contumely any of the consolations of self-pity for which I felt myself craving. In the playground, that one true democracy, there are no circumstantial distinctions, good or ill, but those only which the citizen wins by the slow impress of character. Young Charlotte stood, in my eyes, for this playground world, robbed of its rough corners: she was the true essence of its healthy temper. I shrank ashamed from facing her, and when that was inevitable she doubled my confusion by her haughty indifference. At home at least, I thought, Aunt Sarah must hear

¹ "To those fair lands, those blissful lands, the rich and happy Isles!

Where Ceres year by year crowns all the untilled land with sheaves,
And the vine with purple clusters droops, unpruned of all her leaves!"

—Horace, Epode XVI., Sir Theodore Martin's Translation.

of Charlotte and the Happy Islands, and rouse me to self-respect by her comment on them. But Mr Foster, if he remembered them, knew better than recall them for her ears; and in the school itself the horizon, shutting out these rich and happy lands, closed in upon the range of his ironic eye and the consequences of the "last word."

Between the golden moment and the plain earth my spirit was shaken like a bean in a castor. It was in this way that Foster's mill worked us up.

The school was a common into which all the parents in the town turned their children, and from these hardy pastures I came home at night to Aunt Sarah's unsalted company. Here was a different toughening process. Aunt Sarah and her friends sat—"the Tabbies" Uncle Michael called them—rapping out scandal over their lean knuckles; their hearts, withered like peas, rattling inside of them. Over the tea-cups, until I should make my escape, they caged their stories, but some of the foul birds got out and nested in my memory. Faugh! . . . Into my particular ear Aunt Sarah ran a thin trickle of story about the Trails of the East Coast—of Michael who was wounded at Krotzka, and became one of the knights of the Beggars' Benison; and another Michael, the old sea-lion, a captain who was at Copenhagen; and sometimes—if she was bent on filling the platter—of his son who sailed an East Indiaman and died of cholera before he could

feather the ancestral nest,—a mellow bit of family history, by the tail of which I was to be educated to hang.

"Your mother was a Trail"—that was the refrain piped for me all day long, and never so shrilly as when my father was in the house.

At the sound of it my father would shake a nose in the air and essay to protest, like Rab Cuick's lurcher at a barrel-organ; and the sight of him taking it so badly gave me a distaste for the tune. Moreover, Rab Cuick, when I happened on him, or he on me, would play some variations on it for my benefit. . . . With one of these, in a moment of irritation, I capped Aunt Sarah's performance. I think it was the Copenhagen captain her tongue ran on. . . .

"Was it his son," I asked, "that was such a billy among the lassies?" . . .

"What!" she cried sharply, though I could see that her fingers were smoothing her thin lips out of a laugh.

"He fled the country to America," I said stoutly.

"Who told you such a tale?" she cried, with no laugh now.

"Ho!" said I. "It doesn't matter. Our branch"—I was proving her teaching with a vengeance—"we are only their cousin at the twelfth remove."

At this Aunt Sarah fell into a passion. Conscious of having been too bold, I tried to pass off my gossip as the whole town's possession, but she did not rest until she had drawn from me that Rab Cuick was my informant.

"That man! That tailyer! A parcel of — of . . ." She spat out her venom at the whole family, at which my temper took fire.

"If all tales be true," said I, my heat fusing for the first time Rab's hints and scraps of story into a sequence—"if all tales be true, he was very thick with my grandfather."

Aunt Sarah flung up her hands.

"The man's voice and accent, his very manner o' speech," she cried. "You don't come by this in a day, young gentleman! You have been consorting on the quiet wi' him and his folk. It's pack you deserve to go back to your father this night. The Cuicks, indeed! . . . Tell me, how come you to know so much about the Cuicks?"

"They are at the school," I said, more persuasively.

I knew very well that a championship of Rab Cuick would not be welcome to my father. Moreover, this sudden light that had broken into my accumulated store of hint and story illuminated Rab as well as Provost Trail and the other figures in it.

"Dave and Charlotte and James," I said, therefore, more conciliatory, mentioning the most presentable of the family. . . . "And it's not their fault that their father is—is—is all that. As for Cousin Charlotte, she's" . . .

"Cousin!"

"A distant cousin."

"Hum! Of your father's."

"At least," cried I, stung beyond endurance, and inspired

again with that affectionate admiration with which the elder Charlotte filled me,—“at least, no better woman ever walked the High Street.”

Aunt Sarah looked at me for a moment, and then laughed.

"Glamoured you as well, has she?"

I shrank under the stab of her words, though she could not know wherein they wounded me. It was not that I feared she might withhold me from this family in which something, the most felicitous in me, found an answering note. I knew that she could not lay an embargo upon my intimacy with the Cooks: our playground equality was an institution as firm as the Bass Rock. It happened, too, that this would have been an unfortunate moment (had she entertained the idea) for approaching Mr Foster with an assay of Cooks and Trails. The Trail stock did not grow scholars, even on the youngest collateral wood (as I was there to prove), whereas the lad, James Cook, promised to be the finest bloom Mr Foster had raised in all his years of scholar-culture. Rab and his wife, with their different motives, were eager to venture him at college, which raised them high in Mr Foster's esteem, and already James had justified their resolve, and flown his teacher's scholarship in the world, by being bracketed First with the son of a lord o' Session in the matriculation in Edinburgh. That was a notable triumph for Mr Foster—there are few in this world so unselfish for a man to be proud

of; and the little gentleman would have handled Aunt Sarah roughly (and me, through her) had she threatened to stick a pin into his vauntingness about it.

I saw as much as ever then, and after all it was not much, of Rab's household; but I never saw it again the same. Aunt Sarah's words fell like a blight upon it. They were drops of poison injected into the ardent body of my affection for the elder Charlotte. "Glamoured you, has she?" That saying rose like a cloud ever afterwards between Cousin Charlotte and me. I knew it to be only the exhalation of a sour and envious nature. My affection for the woman at the east end—for it was affection—never wavered, and I strained the eyes of my affection desperately to pierce the slanderous fume and to see her as of old. It could not be. There was truth in Aunt Sarah's words: that was it. I had been glamoured. And now my eyes were opened. I could hear the bones of a skeleton rattle in that family's cupboard. I was conscious of a ghost in that household, a disreputable ghost, ever uneasily on the brink of discovering itself. And, 'spite of my aversion from Aunt Sarah, she had toughened me: toughened me, if you will, to plain usefulness in the world,—still, toughened me. . . . The light and enlarged spirit thrills to every mystery of sense and fortune; but see me, against the sense of something hidden and dubious, something not entirely respectable, in this

family which assailed me, intrenched behind the superiority of descent from the Provost and a line of East Coast Trails!

In truth, it was with the perplexity of the world that I was at this time in callow conflict; and, standing on a gentility at which I had so often scoffed, I had little feeling of security. Moreover, Aunt Sarah was brisk to remind me that one who was as much a Shirra as a Trail had a doubtful title to it. But youth is Nature's concern. Old age is the grown man's own problem: he must solve it unaided as best he may. Into youth's veins is poured the spirit of all the generations of men, and it is strange if it do not uplift him.

The Revivals were passing over the country, the aftermath of the great crop ten years earlier. In due time they were in every St Brise mouth; but I heard of them in advance from James Cook one week-end that he crossed the Firth from Edinburgh, where they were full-blown. He was in debate between pious approval of the evangel and distaste of its prophets. At a meeting (as he confided to me innocently) he had heard one of these, as he stepped down from the rostrum, whisper as he passed to the brother taking his place, "Nicked them that time!" James told me this with a red wave in his face, as if he were repeating a doubtful story. His disgust had become a case of conscience.

So much he revealed to me by the way: he was too fine a lad, too much of the pattern of

his mother, to expose a spiritual experience shamelessly. He spoke of the matter, indeed, generally, a little high-flyingly even, with a kind of professional enthusiasm: his own great gifts—joint-First of his year with the lord of Session's prodigy—were dedicated to the ministry. Being a Scotch boy, with theology bred in the bone, I made an encouraging listener doubtless, and beguiled him out of his reserve. I could feel vaguely that the mood on which his talk was rising and falling was one of uneasiness at the inconsistencies of professing Christians. This was a sympathetic view to me who had Aunt Sarah always in mind. James Cook's soliloquies presented me with another view—the possibility of Christians who did not profess. He showed so apt a desire to admit that possibility, that I jumped to the conclusion that he was thinking of his mother, the elder Charlotte; and up rose Aunt Sarah's words, "Glamoured you, has she?" My own father, again, was not a strongly professing Christian. I had a doubt, though I could not admit it to myself, that he was not a Christian at all. Such was my ravelled mind. The matter was with me still only one of a touchstone applied (so far not very successfully) to friends and acquaintance. I ought to have found assurance in the case of Rab; he, at least, was neither Christian nor professing Christian. But, truth to say, Rab was so aloof from any such common experience as this conversion of which a

whole town could chatter, that he threw doubt upon the value of the touchstone itself. "A new man" was the phrase—but Rab always was a new and strange man! My application of the formula to Rab only convinced me the more of the rascal's native wonderfulness.

I was still gnawing these bones of perplexity when the Revivals crossed the Firth and reached St Brise. Aunt Sarah, among others, took them under her wing: she was a woman always solicitous for the "weaker brethren." That I was one of these she did not permit me to doubt, as she trotted me nightly to the meeting in the church. This of itself was to chafe the old sore which I sat nursing gloomily in the deep pew. The humble and contrite heart was not mine; but the wounded spirit was. That, indeed, was my sore. The perplexity of the world arose less from my inability to understand it than from its inability to understand me. Neither playground nor elders understood me. So I sat in the deep pew apart from the full tide of emotion flowing round me, nursing this slight, brooding the world's incompatibility.

One night there rose a man who had explored the desert at the heart of the continent of emotion and brought back a message for the lonely soul. . . . Man, said he, had a need deeper than a Christ for the next world—a Christ for this. His Christ was a friend, a brother, all allowing, all com-

prehending. Brought to His presence, the incompatibility of the world fell away. He could understand. He could sympathise. . . . It is a message that has fallen refreshingly on many a sick soul down in the valleys of life; it fell on me in that deep pew like balm. The same rain that waters the corn causes the tares to spring. A friend, a counsellor, One who could understand and approve, and, above all, know the fine fellow whom the world ignored! Despite the emotion that melted me, I went home that night with a cock-sure step beside Aunt Sarah. The perplexity of the world had fallen away.

If it did not remain fallen away, that was chiefly because Mr Foster would not permit it to. My newly-acquired ease of mind, I had a feeling, would not be proof against the salt and penetrating temper of the little gentleman, should he search me—as undoubtedly he would, I was convinced, should he guess the assurance I carried about with me. So it fell out. Mr Foster was a bachelor, but even without a wife the domestic wind may shift into a stormy quarter. He arrived at the school one afternoon “with the storm-cone up,” as we passed the word, being skilled in reading the signs of dirty weather. It was the earliest warm day that spring, some of the boys had ventured a dip among the grey rollers, and the heel of a loaf—a discarded chattering bite—lay in the master’s way to his desk. He picked it up and held it aloft,

preaching us a homily on wastry, and demanding the owner. The culprit did not move, and a sudden inscrutable virtuous motion brought me to my feet.

“Yours, David?”

I shook my head.

His keen eyes searched mine.

“Then you know whose it is?”

“Yes.”

“Sir! Sit down!”

The sharp crack of his voice warned me that my assurance was to be brought to the test.

He delivered afresh his sermon against waste, and with a face of yellow disgust ate the bit of bread before our abashed eyes. Knowing the nice man he was, I count him a hero for that.

The famous Mr Ord had arrived in the town the day before with his horses; and this afternoon the school was dismissed early, to see them perform in the ring on the flat sands at the back of the harbour. A word from Mr Foster stayed me behind. The sounds of the retreating scholars died quickly away through the open windows, and I was left in the schoolroom alone, nerving myself against the coming trial with the resolution of a Christian martyr. When at length Mr Foster came to me he was ready to go home. He dressed for the street with care, and always managed to put off with the day’s work the air of his workshop. Something in his dress as in his demeanour confirmed me in the sense of

fighting a holy war against the world. . . .

"You had intended to inform against one of your fellow scholars," he said, stopping opposite me. "And you would have persuaded yourself that that was a virtuous action?" he continued, when I did not answer.

"My conscience tells me that it is," said I, levelling my voice and eyes to his.

"Sir!" said he, "a man must be an extraordinarily good man before he may be guided by his conscience," and pointed to the door.

Never puppy, with tail between his legs, stole away from a whipping so crestfallen as was Master David Shirra, when he issued upon the town from Mr Foster's words. All his assurance was reduced to a heap of ashes; in which, however, smouldered resentment, defiance, pride, self-pity, — all quick still, and ready to burst into flame. He resolutely beat them down, smothered them, smothering at the same time the assurance which they would have stirred into life with them. His instinct to hide himself from himself, as it were! I can still feel his naked humiliation; so keenly, that I am tempted to set it down as the experience of a young gentleman whose skin I never inhabited.

Under drastic discipline youth shoots up buoyant. I had been whipped, had whipped myself, down one slope of confidence, only to acquire an impetus to mount another. By the time I reached the High Street I was already lifting my eyes to look

the world more squarely in the face, with a philosophy of life which had no truck with conscience. The unusual quiet of the street brought to mind Mr Ord's performance, which all the town was attending. Thither I turned my steps also, recollecting the ticket, price twopence, which Aunt Sarah had purchased for me in the morning. A giddy equestrian art chimed with my reacted mood. The desire to witness Mr Ord's famous barebacked lightning-change feat proved healthy nature to be reasserting itself; though the morbid emotions of the last few months still coloured it by excusing the use of the twopenny pass by a reference to Mr Foster's homily on wastefulness. Mr Foster's, truly, was proving a conveniently all-embracing creed, and I was living up to it wonderfully.

The performance was over before I reached the harbour. I met the westward stream of people from it. On the sands the boys still lingered, with straws in their mouths, round a bunch of Shetlands and piebalds, waiting to trail at their tails and see them stabled for the night. Piebalds were a temptation to myself, but I was not sure how my fellows would receive me. Once more in human communion, I felt less assured about everything. Skirting these amateurs of horse-flesh, therefore, I made along the shore eastwards, towards Torrie Town. Spring lay piping in this sheltered bay—Cousin Charlotte's bay, though I did not so think of it as yet—

calling forth even the elders to listen. Her note ran in my blood with a healthy inspiration. I rushed right to the summit of the opposite slope, and looked out upon the goodness of this good world.

Along at the rocks I came upon the girl Charlotte. Her complaisance which hitherto had piqued me did not trouble me now. Occupied with my new vision, I had no eyes for her, and passed her by. It was a challenge. She withdrew herself from her fellows and joined me on the rocks. It was a challenge, I see now, which she accepted without deliberation, urged thereto by some dim unconscious impulse. This was the first day in spring: no fever in the air as yet, no flame of summer blood, only the first delicate white flush of spring. Even so with Charlotte and myself. The indifference and the challenge we rounded off in a bright communication, wherein boy and girl scarce appeared. Her talk ran on the performances at the harbour. In her words I saw them on the golden circus against the rose-grey background of sea and sky. Miss Josephine and Miss Juanetta, tinsel goddesses, pirouetted and genuflected on their ambling creams. Little Miss Angela flashed through silver worlds from her black pony Glaucus. The baggy clown crackled. Old Ord himself, with supple angularity, bravely contested with the rigour of years. I saw them all. Her recital, broken by slip and fall and scramble on

the sea-weed rocks, the hunt for primrose in the sheltered wood-clumps skirting them, the Hark! for the cuckoo's note, ended in view of Torrie Town. So far we had wandered, heedless of the hour. The golden thread had been drawn out of the day, leaving it grey, with gloom on the landward and bitter white on the seaward border. Home by road would take us round by Torrie Town: too long. Back over the rocks was an adventure through which each of us cut our own way. We met again where the trail led down at the tail of the rocks. The sea was lapping them a foot deep. Nothing for it save to wade. Boots off, we waded to the dry sand, and then together, by understood consent without word spoken, barefoot still along the deserted shore, across the ring half blotted out by the incoming tide, to the shelter of the town.

We sat down to put on our boots on a flat buttressing stone at the back of the harbour wall. Two causewayed roads from east and west the High Street converged upon the pier immediately above us. I, sitting on the seaward edge of the stone, commanded the eastward of the two; and my heart gave a sudden leap at sight of Rab making down it under its twinkling lamps. I looked to Charlotte. She also, it appeared, was arrested by some sight, and following her glance I saw Aunt Sarah picking her way over the cobbles on the road from the west. Charlotte turned

towards me, and we looked into each other's eyes a moment. The next we let them fall. The cloud sprang up between our spirits, as, instinctively, we drew closer together within the shadow of the harbour wall.

They met immediately above us: Rab timed his steps. We could not see them now, but every word they spoke was distinct in our ears.

"Mem!" Rab said, "it's we elders' privilege to wait on the young folk."

He had seen us together on the shore, and even if he had not, he would have guessed Aunt Sarah's business from the blue woollen muffler which hung upon her arm. Aunt Sarah knew only that he had divined her purpose, had in an instant leapt to the back of her mind, as it were, and she wavered in her resolution. She awaited more light before she attacked him.

"I'm sent out on a like errand to yours," he continued. "Wild bairns . . . And yet . . . I needn't complain."

She, seeking the conciliatory way to an advantage, followed up his reservation by mumbling something about his boy's success.

"Yes, yes," cried Rab. "If he keep his wind. . . . He's made a prodigious start."

A note of pride, an unaccustomed note of a genuine feeling, in Rab's voice gave her an opening, which she took.

"It runs in the family," she said.

"Ho! ho!" cried Rab, back

on his guard. "Spear-half or spindle-half?"

"Both!" answered Aunt Sarah, with a bitter flash at his meaning.

"Pardon me, mem, you're sharp-sighted, . . . and that, too, runs in the family. Now, spite a' . . . I'd lay odds on young Dauvid." . . .

I could feel in sympathy her fling of anger.

"Ah! He'll quicken after his fallow. Ho! ho! I've had my eye on him, . . . a notable bud, that some day will burst wi' a report like the Talipot palm."

I could swear that Charlotte laughed, though when I stole a glance at her she was hot and angry.

"He takes much after you, Rab Cuick," cried my Aunt, with threatening shrillness.

"Hey! Trails, Shirras, . . . and Rab Cuick. . . . A distinguished auncestry! . . . And yet, mem, there's your sharp-sightedness again: there maun be some link or bond, some common denominator to account for the patent reciprocity between the young gentleman and us."

"Link . . . bond of I'll not stand it, Rab Cuick, I'll not have it," cried Aunt Sarah, in high passion now. "I know you well, . . . the reciprocity's patent enough. You colour him as cochineal colours whipped cream. . . . He's another lad by consorting with you, . . . ill-tongued, ill-minded, strange, not . . . not. . . ."

"Ho! mem, you're prejudiced. A drunk man's a

guid enough prop—if he's set at the right angle. I wouldn't wonder—mark my words!—if I could extract some latent high qualities from the laddie's nature that otherwise were dormant. . . . You're prejudiced, mem. Though, as you weel ken I ken, there was infirm human nature in your ain round o' experience that might have taught you to mak' allowances. . . . But . . . but . . . it's the exalted nature o' woman—you cannot palter wi' frailty. And, let me assure you, it's the exalted, female side of our family that young Mister Dauvid leans to. . . . My gude wife . . ."

"I ken your gudewife. . . . I ken the whole nest. . . . I ken her. She's . . . she's . . ."

"What is she?" cooed Rab.

Charlotte leapt to her feet. I caught her skirt.

"She's . . ." cried the angry shrill voice above us. "Exalted female side! leans he to it?"

"He does that," says Rab. "Tak a step this way, mem."

Before I could comprehend his meaning he and Aunt Sarah were peering down into the gloom on our side of the wall.

"Let go, David Shirra," Charlotte cried aloud now, snatching her skirt from my hold and standing off, in blazing anger, out upon the sands.

I think of her out there now as I dimly understood her to be then—a protest against all

that Aunt Sarah represented as she commanded me up beside her. "Come up here, David Shirra,—instanter!"

Rab bent farther over towards me irresolute.

"Hey, my man! you're learning experience, eh?"

Everything in me stood beside the girl out on the sands; but I climbed the steps to Aunt Sarah.

"Don't be overly hard on him for his little aberration," Rab said mockingly. Aunt Sarah was tying the muffler round my neck. "He'll soon be fu' orderly."

"Bad, ungrateful," she piped shrilly. "Bring me to my death o' cold. . . . Out with that hussy, too. . . . Home—home with you!"

"Curiosity . . . that's youth's jewel;" Rab's words sounded after us.

"If you don't mind me, your conscience at any rate should tell you." . . .

"Ho!" said I, halting in the ignominious road on which she was driving me,—*"it takes a fine good man to be guided safely by his conscience!"*

"That's that man Rab," she cried; "did ever you hear the like?"

"You're wrong," cried I. "It's not Rab, it's Mister Fos——"

But she was buffeting me about the ears, and driving me home before her.

In this manner the mills of St Brise worked us up.

(To be continued.)

THE LITTLE SON.

WHEN my little son is born on a sunny summer morn',
I'll take him sleepin' in my arms to wake beside the sea,
For the windy wathers blue would be dancin' if they knew,
An' the weeny waves that wet the sand come creepin' up to
me.

When my little son is here in the noonday warm an' clear,
I'll carry him so kindly up the glen to Craiga' wood ;
In a green an' tremblin' shadow there I'll hush my tender laddo,
An' the flittin' birds 'll *quet* their songs as if they understood.

When my pretty son's awake, och, the care o' him I'll take !
An' we'll never pass a *gentle* place between the dark an' day ;
If he's lovely in his sleep on his face a veil I'll keep,
Or the wee folk an' the good folk might be wantin' him away.

When my darlin' comes to me he will lie upon my knee,—
Though the world should be my pillow he must know no
harder place ;
Sure a queen's son may be cold in a cradle all o' gold,
But my arm shall be about him an' my kiss upon his face.

MOIRA O'NEILL.

CHINA REVISITED.

BY ALEXANDER MICHIE.

THE GRAND FIASCO—ORDEAL OF TERROR AND TEMPTATION—COMPARATIVE MORALITY—PLAIN DEDUCTIONS—GERMAN DISCIPLINE—SOLDIERS OF ALL NATIONS—THE FLAG MANIA—MILITARY FRICTION—RAVAGES OF FOREIGN TROOPS—INDIAN CONTINGENT—MUTUAL IMPRESSIONS—ANGLO-SAXON RELATIONS.

FROM the foreigner's point of view China at the present juncture bears a certain resemblance to the cosmos itself at the remote period when darkness was upon the face of the deep. It will hardly be expected that a flying visit to China under these circumstances should be very fruitful either in amusement or instruction. The stirring events were over; the storm had subsided; the wreckage strewn the shore; and in the sullen calm which supervened it was open to everybody to cast horoscopes, or to hatch new plots. But of matters of tangible, and at the same time intelligible and practical, interest there was and is considerable dearth.

It is, for instance, an obvious fact that the Great Powers of the world have been for twelve months engaged in coercing China, with disappointing results. To judge fairly of their achievements, however, one would require to have some kind of presentment of the objects which were sought as well as of the hindrances to their attainment. On neither of these heads is it possible to obtain complete enlightenment.

At the threshold of the inquiry we are confronted with an impenetrable cloud, which conceals, as it was no doubt intended to do, the real designs of the Christian Powers. And if their designs can be hidden thus from each other—mayhap in some cases even from themselves!—in an enterprise in which they have been professedly partners, how can we expect to fathom the thoughts, purposes, and possibilities of the vast entity we call China, of which it may be said without paradox that the more we learn the less we know? The agnostic, therefore, as Mr E. H. Parker says, would seem to be the proper attitude in which to approach the Chinese question; but since that favours an observant rather than an active policy, it contributes nothing towards satisfying the daily demand for "something to be done." For practical purposes, therefore, it is of little immediate value. This, however, by the way. The problem, deep and complex, what should be done and what left alone in Eastern Asia, does not come within the scope of the present paper, which is only concerned with

some of the flotsam thrown up in the eddies of the torrent.

The original purpose of the Powers in 1900, the only one in which they were even approximately agreed, was the rescue of their Legations, treacherously beleaguered in the Chinese capital. The relief having been effected on August 14, their forces might either then have been honourably withdrawn, had the Powers so willed, or they might have been reorganised for some further definite purpose. Instead of adopting either alternative, the Powers chose to embark on incoherent enterprises, involved, from their very inception, in essential contradictions. It was surely beginning at the wrong end to solicit negotiations with the Power which they were in arms to punish for its perfidy! Weak Governments have been known to parley with brigands; but the procedure even of China itself—often so alien to our notions—will hardly furnish a precedent for a judge debating his sentence with a prisoner, or an executioner discussing with the condemned the number of strokes to be given in his decapitation. To accompany these solicited “negotiations” with raids on the country was obviously to stultify both the punitive and the diplomatic programmes, reducing them impartially to transparent insincerity, and consequent futility.

It was no doubt a natural expansion of the original scheme of retribution that the Powers should concert measures to ensure for foreign representatives

and residents in China immunity from further outrages. Satisfaction for the past and security for the future could not in fact be logically disconnected. Only the “concert” was wanting to the realisation of that ideal. The apparent harmony of the Powers never descended below the rarefied strata of generality. There it floated in the blue, a sterilised fiction, while on the earth beneath diversity of concrete aims paralysed effective action. This state of things seems not to have been generally recognised until the artificial coalition had brought about a state of affairs far less remediable than that which had originally set the Powers in motion.

But though the objects sought, or professed, have not been gained, the twelve months’ campaign has not been wholly barren. If the wheat has not come up there is at least a luxuriant crop of wild oats to reward the erratic husbandry. Uncalculated results, some of great gravity, others verging on the comic, have grown out of the prolonged crisis. Flash-lights have been thrown upon quite a variety of matters, military, political, ethnic, and moral, whose bearings are not confined within the wide limits even of the China question. Some of these by-products of the situation deserve a passing glance.

Our lives are so wrapped up in conventional draperies that the association of good morality with external decency is universally taken for granted. Com-

pliance with certain rules of social order is assumed, as a self-evident proposition, to stamp the civilised man as immeasurably elevated above the savage. Yet there are occasions, fortunately rare, when the extremes meet and the line of demarcation seems to vanish between barbarism and civilisation. A shock like that of fire, shipwreck, earthquake, or a Mauritius hurricane, may suddenly strip off the habitual covering and disclose in their nakedness the inner characters of the men we live with. Such a rending of the veil, with results both pleasant and the reverse, was effected by the stress of events in North China during the last year of the century.

Seldom perhaps has a non-militant population been called upon to face a more fiery trial than that of the two sieges of Tientsin and Peking. Terror did its worst, and manhood and womanhood were tested to the uttermost. It is matter of legitimate pride and thankfulness that, as a whole, the sufferers emerged invincible from the ordeal. The Chinese hordes might kill the body, but could not break the spirit of the true sons and daughters of the West. There may have been individuals who lost their heads, or in whom the baser qualities of their nature were dragged into light. Let them rest. Over the craven and the selfish Charity will throw her veil, nor will any national "honours list" betray them.

But the trials of these suffering communities were not yet

exhausted. Their moral stamina remained to be proved by a still more searching agency. Out of the very circumstances of their deliverance and triumph there arose fresh experiences which divided the quondam heroic communities by new lines of cleavage. Men and women who had crowned themselves with honour in the night of danger were dazzled in the sunshine of victory. Poor human nature succumbed to the violent reaction. Revenge is sweet; moreover, it was in this case safe and easy, with a strong temptation to vicarious execution. The culpable enemy was out of reach, but there remained two populous cities rich with the treasures of art and of Eastern luxury. Law was temporarily suspended as if, for the purpose of the experiment, some superhuman intelligence had desired to reduce the pretensions of civilised man to their elements. Cupidity, in its two most potent phases, thereupon asserted its unholy dominion. The defencelessness of the Chinese was, in short, an invitation to lust and loot. It is not, of course, to be supposed that foreigners without distinction fell simultaneously under both forms of temptation; but, exceptions excepted, in the general fellowship of lawlessness there is no rank or class or nationality in a position to throw stones at its neighbours. In all classes were individuals who kept their hands clean; but for the rest, soldiers and sailors, merchants and missionaries, Jews and Gentiles, plunged

headlong into the debauch. No equivocation of Secretaries of State, no belated fractional restitution, in deference to awakened opinion, can obliterate the truth. The West, taken off its guard, when it thought nobody was looking, stood revealed before the East, and the East assuredly cannot forget the object-lesson. The West, which had conquered the Terror, was undone by the Temptation.

We desire to speak only in the most general terms in order to avoid invidious discriminations which are not needed to point the moral. For in the eyes of the Chinese nation, as in the vista of history, the Western foreigners are as one body, tied in a bundle, to sink or swim together. What, then, is the particular moral to be drawn from the recent display? Cities have been given over to pillage before now; nor is it the first time in history when "from curbed licence has been plucked the muzzle of restraint." But our self-love has been nurtured on the soothing anodyne that such things belong to the old time before us, when law and order and religion had not yet imparted their last touches to our character. Now the world has seen, at the close of the most self-sufficient of all the centuries, the same extremes of rapine as were recorded in the dark ages. The special excesses of "the soldiery" do not form an attractive subject of contemplation; yet, considering the influence it is sure to have on future relations with

China, even that unsavoury topic cannot be wholly ignored. The Christian refugees, being most accessible, were naturally the first to receive the attentions of their liberators, of whose tender mercies gruesome tales are told,—tales of outrage culminating in the murder or suicide of whole families—after their deliverance!

Atrocities, the mere apprehension of which as committed by Chinese on Europeans sent a thrill of horror throughout the world, were all enacted by the Christian soldiers as soon as they got the Chinese into their power. After a Provisional Government had been set up by the "allies" in Tientsin, and the city was in undisputed occupation of European troops, a torrent of rapine broke loose on the peaceable inhabitants and held its course unchecked until, in despair, a safety-valve was extemporised by the Provisional Government, as the minor of two evils. The thought naturally suggests itself that if these things were done in the "green tree," that is, under the immediate observation of competent European witnesses, what may not have happened in the interior of the country where there was no eye to mark, or tongue to criticise!

The inference that seems most naturally to arise from the looting fever in China is that brigandage is differentiated from respectability mainly by the two criteria Opportunity and the Criminal Law, including in the latter the authority of public opinion. Given un-

guarded property, together with a temporary suspension of the penalty, and the frock-coated citizen falls at once into line with Autolykus. Not universally, however, for, as has been already observed, not a few individuals, even during the Peking and Tientsin carnival, refused to touch the spoils. But is it quite certain that you or I, gentle reader, would have been found in the number of the elect? Let us not be too hard on the many, for the temptation was by no means a slight one. The wealth of the Indies was to be had for the taking; and a few jinrickshas with strong-limbed coolies would carry enough to enrich the judicious gleaner for life. And the moderate man who contented himself with a single embroidered robe or other rich memento of the historic scene—might he not even have been subject to strange revulsions of conscience when he saw his neighbours revelling in untold wealth which might also have been his own fortune had he but let himself go while the fit was on,—while the “fish were running,” as they say on the North Pacific? “*Pecca fortiter*” were perhaps after all the better maxim. Moderation having lost its *raison d’être*, it would be idle to discriminate between those who are not ashamed to live in houses decorated from floor to ceiling with the spoils of the heathen, or whose loot, turned into cash, realises a competence for life, and the more timid ones who paid a perfunctory deference to their scruples. Echoes of the moral law were

not unheard even in the midst of the orgie: the tradition of a lifetime could not be dropped without certain qualms. What the conscientious men—who had been teaching morality all their lives—seemed to require was a justifying formula, and pathetic have been their efforts in some cases to discover one. The picture of a venerable pastor asking a blessing, so to speak, before meals, calling aloud for the “owner of this house,” in default of whose immediate appearance the portable contents found a new owner, may stand as the representative of the looters who were handicapped by a conscience, albeit a trained conscience, working in prescribed grooves. The Rev. Gilbert Reid, D.D., has some pertinent observations on the subject in the ‘Forum’ for July. Like Warren Hastings, he is astonished at his own moderation—nay, he is grieved to think of it. “Personally, I regret that the guilty suffered so little at my hands.” His formula is that “loot means spoils of war,” and, war being assumed, then not only the victorious troops but even the camp followers were justified in seizing all their enemies’ property they could get. “The question (with the spoiler) was not which Chinaman was the worst, but which house was the richest.”

In matters of casuistry, as well as of social ethics, one class always stands apart from the body of the people—the class who are their own law-makers, who possess a talisman which consecrates everything they do,

in the magic letters *A.M.D.G.*¹ It is useless to apply to the members of the priestly caste the common rules of human righteousness; for they are superior to all that. Transactions which in commercial life would be mere rascality, and in social life would procure expulsion from any club of gentlemen, may be transmuted into piety by the alchemy of a code which is, happily, not of this world. If all tales are true some of the noblest annexations of Chinese property, Napoleonic in their conception, have been effected under the sacred ægis. Let us, however, in fairness remember that there are Protestant equivalents also of the mystic badge.

Into ethical subtleties of that order the Chinese cannot of course be expected to enter. They have seen what they have seen, and their verdict will be formed on the broad and simple lines which a common jury would follow, on facts patent to all men. They have had a clearer insight than ever before into the character of the civilisation which the foreign nations have undertaken to force upon them, and the impression can never be effaced.

No doubt national characteristics of a very superior order were being exhibited at the same time by the Allied forces: pity and protection for the oppressed, just government established within small areas, and kindly relations maintained with the peaceable people, as

in all previous maritime invasions. Such proofs of human kindness never fail to evoke gratitude, for the Chinese are far from unappreciative of justice and mercy. It might therefore be supposed that the favourable would balance, if not overbalance, the unfavourable impression left by the behaviour of the foreigners. Experience, however, does not support such a view; it is the evil that men do that lives after them. The good may have its secret influence, but it is the evil which leaves its stigma; and it were as reasonable to expect the world-wide beneficence of British rule to be remembered by the people for whom Continental journals are written, as that the nobler side of the foreign invasion of North China should colour the national sentiment of the Chinese. The injuries will rankle while the benefits are forgot, and the extent of these injuries is but faintly shadowed in this paper.

Among the least expected discoveries of the Chinese *mélée* may be mentioned the curious limitations of German military discipline and certain imperfections in the German equipment for the kind of service required of an expedition in China. It is acknowledged that wherever military work was to be done, as in the defence of the Legation in Peking, or in garrison duty, the German was second to none. But outside of Peking, and after the relief of the Legation, there

¹ "Ad Majorem Dei Gloriam," the motto of the Jesuit Order, but the reference here is general.

was no work to be had worthy of an army with a German reputation. Out of action the habits of the German soldier recall rather too much the brusquerie of the middle ages. Roaming about in small squads, armed but uncontrolled, they are a terror indeed—but not always to evil-doers. The malefactors who have fallen to German arms might be soon counted, while the peaceable inhabitants complained grievously of the rigours of the German soldiers. In the relations with the people of the country a disposition to dispense with preliminaries has been remarked upon, a readiness to come straight to the point—even when it happened to be the point of the bayonet. The want of a medium of communication no doubt to some extent explained this brevity of argument. When a sentry in a voice that makes the earth shake cries Halt! what can a terrified Chinaman do but drop his bundle and run, and what alternative is then left to the unhappy sentry but to shoot? If an English lighter manned by Chinese bump accidentally against a German bridge, nothing short of a fusilade seems sufficient to meet so dire an emergency.

It would not be difficult for a special pleader to discover excuses for the imperfectly suppressed irritation of the German troops. The expedition was organised with inflated expectations, and officers and men who volunteered for the service have been mortified beyond expression by the inglorious part they

have been called upon to play. Like the gambler who kicked the unoffending boy who was “always tying his shoe,” the German soldiers have been much in want of some one on whom to visit their own disappointment. Possibly in their expeditions into the interior they imagined themselves, in the beginning, to be engaged in the grand scheme of fighting Attila as Von Moltke said he was fighting Louis XIV. What has been done under this quixotic inspiration while German troops were perambulating the country in search of an enemy will undoubtedly keep their name alive in North China for some time to come. That item in the programme will not fail.

The dumping of the troops of eight different nationalities on one spot—for even predatory Italy insisted on being represented by an honorary contingent—was, as a histrionic spectacle, by no means without merit. For assuredly a considerable degree of entertainment was afforded by it to the great public who care little for the drama, but are amused by its scenic incidents. No common purpose, no honest avowable purpose, could possibly be served by this heterogeneous concourse of military atoms, unless it were the negative one of checkmating one another. They were packed so close that attrition and concussion were constant; nor were the resulting scintillations without illuminating effects, the illumination being producible, without any very

severe strain on the imaginative faculty, over a wider field than the immediate theatre of observation. The exhibition in North China was in short a working model of what a pan-Christian alliance, with non-Christian Japan thrown in, would be; and no wise statesman will despise the lessons which the experiment has suggested.

The first contact which the visitor makes—or made, for the circumstances have somewhat changed—with the picturesque throng is at Taku and Tongku, the former the mud-built town which gives its name to the historic forts, the latter the terminus or reversing station of the railway which connects Peking with the sea, and with the Russian lines beyond the Great Wall. The low, greasy mud-banks of the Peiho, erstwhile devoted to the prosaic traffic of salt-boats, are patched like a checkered counterpane with samples of all the foreign troops, who add to their motley appearance by copying the Chinese military practice of flag-decoration. Germans, Japanese, French, and Russian troops occupy every inch of standing room, and more flags flutter over them than would suffice for a French exploration of the whole of Africa, or for all the American tourists in Canadian summer resorts. In contrast with this display, the Union Jack is not visible at all until you reach the railway station, which is under the control of a British officer. There a solitary flag, usually blown to rags, attests the

one simple fact. The bunting mania extends to Tientsin, where the narrowest paths separate the troops of different nationalities, who are all day long looking into each others' eyes. But it is in Peking that the efflorescence of bunting attains its fullest development. A moderate computation would yield a total of many thousand French and German flags spread over that city, in some districts each house being decorated by this symbol of national appropriation or "protection," which amounts nearly to the same thing; the unlucky owners being meanwhile left to fight a losing battle for recovery with the big battalions. Of British flags the visitor would find it hard to exhaust the fingers of both hands in their enumeration, including the one flying from the dwarf flagstaff over the gate of the Legation. This, however, is in some measure due to the intricate construction of our national emblem, which retards the manufacture.

Peking is so large that the process of "getting a place in the sun" does not involve the same degree of trampling and jostling as in some other localities. The Powers there proceed on a wholesale plan, as if they were parcelling out an uninhabited continent, and, thanks to the magnificent scale on which the city has been laid out, there is no excuse for any Power treading on another's toes. Italy and Austria, having the preponderant interest in China, naturally grab the lion's share of the vast spaces within the

walls. They may have all they want, and more than they can digest, without trenching on the domains of other Powers, for of course the Chinese owners and occupiers of these intramural territories are considered no more than the herds of buffalo were on the American prairies. That there will come a day of reckoning for these filibustering proceedings is moderately certain. But, one thing at a time, "let us take the cash and let the credit go." Besides, who knows but that some of these aggrieved Chinese may have borne a hand in the anti-foreign outrages of 1900? Who can reasonably be expected to distinguish between one pigtail and another?

The real international friction, as well as mutual observation and criticism, has occurred in Tientsin, where alone is a mixed civil community standing as a buffer between the bayonets and spurred heels of the different armies. For instead of choosing convenient camping-grounds on the dry and salubrious soil around the city, it suited the commanding officers, in their praiseworthy quest after that ideal "place in the sun," to settle themselves in the houses owned by the foreign residents, and to quarter their men in the adjoining premises and in the native town. Where rents were paid at all they were, of course, in so confined a space, exorbitant; but what did that matter, seeing the Chinese Government was to be made to pay for all without the privilege of audit? Weak as the economic principle is apt to be in all military

expeditions, it was apparently non-existent in and about Tientsin, where it seemed as if the foreign chiefs were engaged in piling on expenses as a penal measure against China.

The troops could hardly move in the streets without, so to say, crossing swords, for all except the English carried side-arms even when on a drunken spree. Under these circumstances it did not take long for the various corps to take stock of each other. Never, indeed, was there a finer opportunity for mutual study. Although by no means immaculate in certain respects, the British Tommy was acknowledged by reasonable observers to stand out from the Continental allies as regards what may be termed his social discipline. He was quiet and respectful in the street, while his neighbours were blustering and tyrannical, stopping and seizing vehicles, belabouring the natives, and even shooting them on the most fantastic provocation. Certain of the French troops had the credit of being among the most unruly, they and their allies the Cossacks making the streets of the British settlement and vicinity unsafe for a lady. As for the Chinese they dared not go out of their houses on Sundays, the day dedicated to Bacchus and Venus. The self-restraint of the British soldier offered great temptation to some of the ill-mannered allies, who resorted to the street Arab form of insult, very trying to the temper of both British and Colonial. All this was subsequently ameliorated by the substitu-

tion of troops whom the officers had better in hand. The Americans, both soldiers and sailors, were manly and orderly throughout, while the Japanese appeared to be nearly faultless from a military as well as a social point of view.

It is a fact, at once memorable and lamentable, that the wreckage of property in Tientsin was entirely the work of the liberating soldiers; who took possession and robbed, smashing all that they could not carry off. The buildings on the French concession were completely demolished by French soldiers; while British and Russians for once occupied common ground in wreaking vengeance against inanimate things in the British concession. Nevertheless the losses from this cause are duly inventoried—nothing extenuated—by French and Germans as part of their national claim against the Chinese Government. The only excuse for foreign soldiers being located at all in the normally quiet streets of Tientsin was the need of policing; but the ordinary municipal force was quite competent to that duty, and military policing was only rendered necessary by the presence of disorderly troops roaming about off duty, but always with arms, and apparently in a constant fever to use them.

One noteworthy result of the unpleasantly close contact and daily scrutiny was the impression made on the Indian troops, who were intensely and intelligently interested in their new international discoveries. The first thing they perceived

was that their field equipment, transport, and commissariat were unapproached by the European allies. Secondly, being men of pedigree, they were unfavourably impressed by the low habits of some of the European soldiers. "These Sahibs! Then there must be a sweeper caste among the Sahibs." As for the military prestige of the Europeans, the Indians, after close inspection, derided it; and they would enjoy nothing better than to meet some of them in another capacity. What impression the Indian troops made on the Europeans, who saw them at close quarters and for the first time, can only be guessed. Count Waldersee paid them a formal compliment on leaving China. But one thing may be taken as certain—the lessons afforded by the Indian troops in the organisation and equipment of a Colonial force will not be thrown away on Germany.

This little sketch would be wanting in symmetry if it did not take some account of the relations which grew up between the American and English forces during the year. At a distance, and on paper, a glamour of sentiment may be created by factitious agencies between alien peoples who have never seen each other—which, however, does not bear the test of closer acquaintance. Persons whose sympathy with the Boers, for example, was strong enough to impel them to take up arms in their cause were, in many instances, disillusioned on actual contact with their adopted allies. On the other hand,

cognate races, speaking the same language,—though, when separated by distance and politics, easily inflamed against each other by the zeal of their newspapers or self-seeking leaders,—may yet discover, on a nearer and independent view, so many unsuspected points of resemblance that they begin to understand, and eventually feel at home with, each other. It would almost appear as if some such process—on a very small scale, of course—had been in operation during the twelve months' interaction between English and American troops in China. The effects have been twofold. On one side a slow realisation of the points of difference in the case of French, German, and Russians; and on the other, the complementary discovery of points of harmony as between the two Anglo-Saxon races themselves. No professor's thesis was required to work out the conclusion—nor, in fact, was any conclusion worked out at all in any such form as could be put into words. There was simply the outcome of a process of daily intercourse whereby the elements of antagonism were slowly, perhaps unconsciously, eliminated, leaving a residuum of affinity of language, ideas, and principles of action. The soldiers of the two countries came to be more congenial to each other than either of them did to their Continental comrades, and "like drew to like" in an easy and natural way.

It is not a very surprising or far-fetched result, though it is

interesting and in a sense important. Family feeling may lie long dormant, and seem to be dead, buried under sordid interests, petty feuds, magnified by being dwelt upon, mistaken jealousies, grievances easy of remedy in the bud become hardened by long nursing, and a thousand other roots of bitterness; and yet at a given moment, through the occurrence of some event of common interest, natural affection may break through the superincumbent rubbish and shoot up into life, like the ice-plant through snow. What is true of a family is in a fainter degree true of a people. Race affinity can no more be extinguished than race antagonism, though they are both liable to dissimulation in the garb of their opposites. The recent events in China have afforded this incidental glimpse, for it is no more than that, into a truth which may, under circumstances not now foreseen, assume a wider significance. It is essentially non-political, and it would be mischievous to bring it into account in considering any of the transactions of the day. Business is business after all; and the ice-plant will grow best left to itself. But although the feeling we have been endeavouring to point at represents an instinct older, deeper, and more enduring than any politics, national or international, or rather, because of that, the statesmen of the future would not be wise in entirely ignoring so vital, if somewhat obscure, a factor in the world's development.

TELLING MRS BAKER.

BY HENRY LAWSON.

MOST Bushmen who hadn't "known Bob Baker to speak to," had "heard tell of him." He'd been a squatter, not many years before, on the Macquarie river in New South Wales, and had made money in the good seasons, and had gone in for horse-racing and racehorse-breeding, and long trips to Sydney, where he put up at swell hotels and went the pace. So after a pretty severe drought, when the sheep died by thousands on his runs, Bob Baker went under, and the bank took over his station and put a manager in charge.

He'd been a jolly, open-handed, popular man, which means that he'd been a selfish man as far as his wife and children were concerned, for they had to suffer for it in the end. Such generosity is often born of vanity, or moral cowardice, or both mixed. It's very nice to hear the chaps sing "For he's a jolly good fellow," but you've mostly got to pay for it twice—first in company, and afterwards alone. I once heard the chaps singing that I was a jolly good fellow, when I was leaving a place and they were giving me a send-off. It thrilled me, and brought a warm gush to my eyes; but, all the same, I wished I had half the money I'd lent them and spent on 'em, and I wished I'd used the time I'd wasted to be a jolly good fellow.

When I first met Bob Baker he was a boss-drover on the great north-western route, and his wife lived at the township of Solong on the Sydney side. He was going north to new country round by the Gulf of Carpentaria, with a big mob of cattle, on a two years' trip; and I and my mate, Andy M'Culloch, engaged to go with him. We wanted to have a look at the Gulf Country.

After we had crossed the Queensland border it seemed to me that the Boss was too fond of going into wayside shanties and town pubs. Andy had been with him on another trip, and he told me that the Boss was only going this way lately. Andy knew Mrs Baker well, and seemed to think a deal of her. "She's a good little woman," said Andy. "One of the right stuff. I worked on their station for a while when I was a nipper, and I know. She was always a damned sight too good for the Boss, but she believed in him. When I was coming away this time she says to me, 'Look here, Andy, I'm afraid Robert is drinking again. Now I want you to look after him for me, as much as you can—you seem to have as much influence with him as any one. I want you to promise me that you'll never have a drink with him.'

"And I promised," said Andy, "and I'll keep my word." Andy

was a chap who could keep his word, and nothing else. And, no matter how the Boss persuaded, or sneered, or swore at him, Andy would never drink with him.

It got worse and worse: the Boss would ride on ahead and get drunk at a shanty, and sometimes he'd be days behind us; and when he'd catch up to us his temper would be just about as much as we could stand. At last he went on a howling spree at Mulgatown, about a hundred and fifty miles north of the border, and, what was worse, he got in tow with a flash barmaid there—one of those girls who are engaged, by the publicans up country, as baits for chequemen.

He went mad over that girl. He drew an advance cheque from the stock-owner's agent there, and knocked that down; then he raised some more money somehow, and spent that—mostly on the girl.

We did all we could. Andy got him along the track for a couple of stages, and just when we thought he was all right, he slipped us in the night and went back.

We had two other men with us, but had the devil's own bother on account of the cattle. It was a mixed-up job all round. You see it was all big runs round there, and we had to keep the bullocks moving along the route all the time, or else get into trouble for trespass. The agent wasn't going to go to the expense of putting the cattle in a paddock until the Boss sobered up; there was very little grass on the route or

the travelling - stock reserves or camps, so we had to keep travelling for grass.

The world might wobble and all the banks go bung, but the cattle have to go through—that's the law of the stock-routes. So the agent wired to the owners, and, when he got their reply, he sacked the Boss and sent the cattle on in charge of another man. The new Boss was a drover coming south after a trip; he had his two brothers with him, so he didn't want me and Andy; but, anyway, we were full up of this trip, so we arranged, between the agent and the new Boss, to get most of the wages due to us—the Boss had drawn some of our stuff and spent it.

We could have started on the back track at once, but, drunk or sober, mad or sane, good or bad, it isn't Bush religion to desert a mate in a hole; and the Boss was a mate of ours, so we stuck to him.

We camped on the creek, outside the town, and kept him in the camp with us as much as possible, and did all we could for him.

"How could I face his wife if I went home without him?" asked Andy, "or any of his old mates?"

The Boss got himself turned out of the pub. where the barmaid was, and then he'd hang round the other pubs., and get drink somehow, and fight, and get knocked about. He was an awful object by this time, wild-eyed and gaunt, and he hadn't washed or shaved for days.

Andy got the constable in

charge of the police station to lock him up for a night, but it only made him worse: we took him back to the camp next morning, and while our eyes were off him for a few minutes he slipped away into the scrub, stripped himself naked, and started to hang himself to a leaning tree with a piece of clothes-line rope. We got to him just in time.

Then Andy wired to the Boss's brother Ned, who was fighting the drought, the rabbit-pest, and the banks, on a small station back on the border. Andy reckoned it was about time to do something.

Perhaps the Boss hadn't been quite right in his head before he started drinking—he had acted queer some time, now we came to think of it; maybe he'd got a touch of sunstroke or got brooding over his troubles—anyway he died in the horrors within the week.

His brother Ned turned up on the last day, and Bob thought he was the devil, and grappled with him. It took the three of us to hold the Boss down sometimes.

Sometimes, towards the end, he'd be sensible for a few minutes and talk about his "poor wife and children"; and immediately afterwards he'd fall a-cursing me, and Andy, and Ned, and calling us devils. He cursed everything; he cursed his wife and children, and yelled that they were dragging him down to hell. He died raving mad. It was the worst case of death in the horrors of drink that I ever saw or heard of in the Bush.

Ned saw to the funeral: it was very hot weather, and men have to be buried quick who die out there in the hot weather—especially men who die in the state the Boss was in. Then Ned went to the public-house where the barmaid was and called the landlord out. It was a desperate fight: the publican was a big man, and a bit of a fighting man; but Ned was one of those quiet, simple-minded chaps who will carry a thing through to death when they make up their minds. He gave that publican nearly as good a thrashing as he deserved. The constable in charge of the station backed Ned, while another policeman picked up the publican. Sounds queer to you city people, doesn't it?

Next morning we three started south. We stayed a couple of days at Ned Baker's station on the border, and then started on our three-hundred-mile ride down-country. The weather was still very hot, so we decided to travel at night for a while, and left Ned's place at dusk. He parted from us at the homestead gate. He gave Andy a small packet, done up in canvas, for Mrs Baker, which Andy told me contained Bob's pocket-book, letters, and papers. We looked back, after we'd gone a piece along the dusty road, and saw Ned still standing by the gate; and a very lonely figure he looked. Ned was a bachelor. "Poor old Ned," said Andy to me. "He was in love with Mrs Bob Baker before she got married, but she picked the wrong man—girls mostly do. Ned and

Bob were together on the Macquarie, but Ned left when his brother married, and he's been up in these God-forsaken scrubs ever since. Look, I want to tell you something, Jack: Ned has written to Mrs Bob to tell her that Bob died of fever, and everything was done for him that could be done, and that he died easy—and all that sort of thing. Ned sent her some money, and she is to think that it was the money due to Bob when he died. Now I'll have to go and see her when we get to Solong: there's no getting out of it, I'll have to face her—and you'll have to come with me."

"Damned if I will!" I said.

"But you'll have to," said Andy. "You'll have to stick to me; you're surely not crawler enough to desert a mate in a case like this? I'll have to lie like hell—I'll have to lie as I never lied to a woman before; and you'll have to back me and corroborate every lie."

I'd never seen Andy show so much emotion.

"There's plenty of time to fix up a good yarn," said Andy. He said no more about Mrs Baker, and we only mentioned the Boss's name casually, until we were within about a day's ride of Solong; then Andy told me the yarn he'd made about the Boss's death.

"And I want you to listen, Jack," he said, "and remember every word—and if you can fix up a better yarn you can tell me afterwards. Now it was like this: the Boss wasn't too well when he crossed the border. He complained of pains in his

back and head and a stinging pain in the back of his neck, and he had dysentery bad,—but that doesn't matter; it's lucky I ain't supposed to tell a woman all the symptoms. The Boss stuck to the job as long as he could, but we managed the cattle and made it as easy as we could for him. He'd just take it easy, and ride on from camp to camp, and rest. One night I rode to a town off the route (or you did, if you like) and got some medicine for him: that made him better for a while, but at last, a day or two this side of Mulgatown, he had to give up. A squatter there drove him into town in his buggy and put him up at the best hotel. The publican knew the Boss and did all he could for him—put him in the best room and wired for another doctor. We wired for Ned as soon as we saw how bad the Boss was, and Ned rode night and day and got there three days before the Boss died. The Boss was a bit off his head some of the time with the fever, but was calm and quiet towards the end and died easy. He talked a lot about his wife and children, and told us to tell the wife not to fret, but to cheer up for the children's sake. How does that sound?"

I'd been thinking while I listened, and an idea struck me.

"Why not let her know the truth?" I asked. "She's sure to hear of it sooner or later; and if she knew he was only a selfish, drunken blackguard she might get over it all the sooner."

"You don't know women,

Jack," said Andy quietly. "And, anyway, even if she is a sensible woman, we've got a dead mate to consider as well as a living woman."

"But she's sure to hear the truth sooner or later," I said, "the Boss was so well known."

"And that's just the reason why the truth might be kept from her," said Andy. "If he wasn't well known—and nobody could help liking him, after all, when he was straight—if he wasn't so well known the truth might leak out unawares. She won't know if I can help it, or at least not yet a while. If I see any chaps that come from the North I'll put them up to it. I'll tell M'Grath, the publican at Solong, too: he's a straight man—he'll keep his ears open and warn chaps. One of Mrs Baker's sisters is staying with her, and I'll give her a hint, so that she can warn off any women that might get hold of a yarn. Besides, Mrs Baker is sure to go and live in Sydney, where all her people are—she was a Sydney girl; and she's not likely to meet any one there that will tell her the truth. I can tell her that it was the last wish of the Boss that she should shift to Sydney."

We smoked and thought a while, and by-and-by Andy had what he called a "happy thought." He went to his saddle-bags and got out the small canvas packet that Ned had given him: it was sewn up with packing-thread, and Andy ripped it open with his pocket-knife.

"What are you doing, Andy?" I asked.

"Ned's an innocent old fool, as far as sin is concerned," said Andy. "I guess he hasn't looked through the Boss's letters, and I'm just going to see that there's nothing here that will make liars of us."

He looked through the letters and papers by the light of the fire. There were some letters from Mrs Baker to her husband, also a portrait of her and the children; these Andy put aside. But there were other letters from barmaids and women who were not fit to be seen in the same street with the Boss's wife; and there were portraits—one or two flash ones. There were two letters from other men's wives too.

"And one of those men, at least, was an old mate of his!" said Andy, in a tone of disgust.

He threw the lot into the fire; then he went through the Boss's pocket-book and tore out some leaves that had notes and addresses on them, and burnt them too. Then he sewed up the packet again and put it away in his saddle-bag.

"Such is life!" said Andy, with a yawn that might have been half a sigh.

We rode into Solong early in the day, turned our horses out in a paddock, and put up at M'Grath's pub. until such time as we made up our minds as to what we'd do or where we'd go. We had an idea of waiting until the shearing season started and then making Out-Back to the big sheds.

Neither of us was in a hurry to go and face Mrs Baker.

"We'll go after dinner," said Andy at first; then after dinner we had a drink, and felt sleepy, —we weren't used to big dinners of roast-beef and vegetables and pudding, and, besides, it was drowsy weather,—so we decided to have a snooze and then go. When we woke up it was late in the afternoon, so we thought we'd put it off till after tea. "It wouldn't be manners to walk in while they're at tea," said Andy—"it would look as if we only came for some grub."

But while we were at tea a little girl came with a message that Mrs Baker wanted to see us, and would be very much obliged if we'd call up as soon as possible. You see, in those small towns you can't move without the thing getting round inside of half an hour.

"We'll have to face the music now!" said Andy, "and no get out of it." He seemed to hang back more than I did. There was another pub. opposite where Mrs Baker lived, and when we got up the street a bit I said to Andy—

"Suppose we go and have another drink first, Andy? We might be kept in there an hour or two."

"You don't want another drink," said Andy, rather short. "Why, you seem to be going the same way as the Boss!" But it was Andy that edged off towards the pub. when we got near Mrs Baker's place. "All right!" he said. "Come on! We'll have this other drink, since you want it so bad."

We had the drink, then we buttoned up our coats and

started across the road—we'd bought new shirts and collars, and spruced up a bit. Half-way across Andy grabbed my arm and asked—

"How do you feel now, Jack?"

"Oh, I'm all right," I said.

"For God's sake!" said Andy, "don't put your foot in it and make a mess of it."

"I won't, if you don't."

Mrs Baker's cottage was a little weather-board box affair back in a garden. When we went in through the gate Andy gripped my arm again and whispered—

"For God's sake stick to me now, Jack!"

"I'll stick all right," I said—"you've been having too much beer, Andy."

I had seen Mrs Baker before, and remembered her as a cheerful, contented sort of woman, bustling about the house and getting the Boss's shirts and things ready when we started North. Just the sort of woman that is contented with housework and the children, and with nothing particular about her in the way of brains. But now she sat by the fire looking like the ghost of herself. I wouldn't have recognised her at first. I never saw such a change in a woman, and it came like a shock to me.

Her sister let us in, and after a first glance at Mrs Baker I had eyes for the sister and no one else. She was a Sydney girl, about twenty-four or twenty-five, and fresh and fair—not like the sun-browned women we were used to see. She was a pretty, bright-eyed

girl, and seemed quick to understand, and very sympathetic. She had been educated, Andy had told me, and wrote stories for the Sydney 'Bulletin' and other Sydney papers. She had her hair done and was dressed in the city style, and that took us back a bit at first.

"It's very good of you to come," said Mrs Baker in a weak, weary voice, when we first went in. "I heard you were in town."

"We were just coming when we got your message," said Andy. "We'd have come before, only we had to see to the horses."

"It's very kind of you, I'm sure," said Mrs Baker.

They wanted us to have tea, but we said we'd just had it. Then Miss Standish (the sister) wanted us to have tea and cake; but we didn't feel as if we could handle cups and saucers and pieces of cake successfully just then.

There was something the matter with one of the children in a back-room, and the sister went to see to it. Mrs Baker cried a little quietly.

"You musn't mind me," she said. "I'll be all right presently, and then I want you to tell me all about poor Bob. It's seeing you, that saw the last of him, that set me off."

Andy and I sat stiff and straight, on two chairs against the wall, and held our hats tight, and stared at a picture of Wellington meeting Blucher on the opposite wall. I thought it was lucky that that picture was there.

The child was calling "mum-ma," and Mrs Baker went in to it, and her sister came out. "Best tell her all about it and get it over," she whispered to Andy. "She'll never be content until she hears all about poor Bob from some one who was with him when he died. Let me take your hats. Make yourselves comfortable."

She took the hats and put them on the sewing-machine. I wished she'd let us keep them, for now we had nothing to hold on to, and nothing to do with our hands; and as for being comfortable, we were just about as comfortable as two cats on wet bricks.

When Mrs Baker came into the room she brought little Bobby Baker, about four years old; he wanted to see Andy. He ran to Andy at once, and Andy took him up on his knee. He was a pretty child, but he reminded me too much of his father.

"I'm so glad you've come, Andy!" said Bobby.

"Are you, Bobby?"

"Yes. I wants to ask you about daddy. You saw him go away, didn't you?" and he fixed his great wondering eyes on Andy's face.

"Yes," said Andy.

"He went up among the stars, didn't he?"

"Yes," said Andy.

"And he isn't coming back to Bobby any more?"

"No," said Andy. "But Bobby's going to him by-and-by."

Mrs Baker had been leaning back in her chair, resting her head on her hand, tears glisten-

ing in her eyes; now she began to sob, and her sister took her out of the room.

Andy looked miserable. "I wish to God I was off this job!" he whispered to me.

"Is that the girl that writes the stories?" I asked.

"Yes," he said, staring at me in a hopeless sort of way, "and poems too."

"Is Bobby going up among the stars?" asked Bobby.

"Yes," said Andy — "if Bobby's good."

"And auntie?"

"Yes."

"And mumma?"

"Yes."

"Are you going, Andy?"

"Yes," said Andy hopelessly.

"Did you see daddy go up amongst the stars, Andy?"

"Yes," said Andy, "I saw him go up."

"And he isn't coming down again any more?"

"No," said Andy.

"Why isn't he?"

"Because he's going to wait up there for you and mumma, Bobby."

There was a long pause, and then Bobby asked—

"Are you going to give me a shilling, Andy?" with the same expression of innocent wonder in his eyes.

Andy slipped half-a-crown into his hand. "Auntie" came in and told him he'd see Andy in the morning and took him away to bed, after he'd kissed us both solemnly; and presently she and Mrs Baker settled down to hear Andy's story.

"Brace up now, Jack, and keep your wits about you,"

whispered Andy to me just before they came in.

"Poor Bob's brother Ned wrote to me," said Mrs Baker, "but he scarcely told me anything. Ned's a good fellow, but he's very simple, and never thinks of anything."

Andy told her about the Boss not being well after he crossed the border.

"I knew he was not well," said Mrs Baker, "before he left. I didn't want him to go. I tried hard to persuade him not to go this trip. I had a feeling that I oughtn't to let him go. But he'd never think of anything but me and the children. He promised he'd give up droving after this trip, and get something to do near home. The life was too much for him—riding in all weathers and camping out in the rain, and living like a dog. But he was never content at home. It was all for the sake of me and the children. He wanted to make money and start on a station again. I shouldn't have let him go. He only thought of me and the children! Oh! my poor, dear, kind, dead husband!" She broke down again and sobbed, and her sister comforted her, while Andy and I stared at Wellington meeting Blucher on the field of Waterloo. I thought the artist had heaped up the dead a bit extra, and I thought that I wouldn't like to be trod on by horses, even if I was dead.

"Don't you mind," said Miss Standish, "she'll be all right presently," and she handed us the 'Illustrated Sydney Journal.' This was a great relief,

—we bumped our heads over the pictures.

Mrs Baker made Andy go on again, and he told her how the Boss broke down near Mulga-town. Mrs Baker was opposite him and Miss Standish opposite me. Both of them kept their eyes on Andy's face: he sat, with his hair straight up like a brush as usual, and kept his big innocent grey eyes fixed on Mrs Baker's face all the time he was speaking. I watched Miss Standish. I thought she was the prettiest girl I'd ever seen: it was a bad case of love at first sight, but she was far and away above me, and the case was hopeless. I began to feel pretty miserable, and to think back into the past: I just heard Andy droning away by my side.

"So we fixed him up comfortable in the waggonette with the blankets and coats and things," Andy was saying, "and the squatter started into Mulga-town. . . . It was about thirty miles, Jack, wasn't it?" he asked, turning suddenly to me. He always looked so innocent that there were times when I itched to knock him down.

"More like thirty-five," I said, waking up.

Miss Standish fixed her eyes on me, and I had another look at Wellington and Blucher.

"They were all very good and kind to the Boss," said Andy. "They thought a lot of him up there. Everybody was fond of him."

"I know it," said Mrs Baker. "Nobody could help liking him. He was one of the kindest men that ever lived."

"Tanner, the publican, couldn't have been kinder to his own brother," said Andy. "The local doctor was a decent chap, but he was only a young fellow, and Tanner hadn't much faith in him, so he wired for an older doctor at Mackintyre, and he even sent out fresh horses to meet the doctor's buggy. Everything was done that could be done, I assure you, Mrs Baker."

"I believe it," said Mrs Baker. "And you don't know how it relieves me to hear it. And did the publican do all this at his own expense?"

"He wouldn't take a penny, Mrs Baker."

"He must have been a good true man. I wish I could thank him."

"Oh, Ned thanked him for you," said Andy, though without meaning more than he said.

"I wouldn't have fancied that Ned would have thought of that," said Mrs Baker. "When I first heard of my poor husband's death, I thought perhaps he'd been drinking again—that worried me a lot."

"He never touched a drop after he left Solong, I can assure you, Mrs Baker," said Andy quickly.

Now I noticed that Miss Standish seemed surprised or puzzled, once or twice, while Andy was speaking, and leaned forward to listen to him; then she leaned back in her chair and clasped her hands behind her head and looked at him, with half-shut eyes, in a way I didn't like. Once or twice she looked at me as if she was going to ask me a question, but I always looked away quick

and stared at Blucher and Wellington, or into the empty fireplace, till I felt that her eyes were off me. Then she asked Andy a question or two, in all innocence I believe now, but it scared him, and at last he watched his chance and winked at her sharp. Then she gave a little gasp and shut up like a steel trap.

The sick child in the bedroom coughed and cried again. Mrs Baker went to it. We three sat like a deaf-and-dumb institution, Andy and I staring all over the place: presently Miss Standish excused herself, and went out of the room after her sister. She looked hard at Andy as she left the room, but he kept his eyes away.

"Brace up now, Jack," whispered Andy to me, "the worst is coming."

When they came in again Mrs Baker made Andy go on with his story.

"He—he died very quietly," said Andy, hitching round, and resting his elbows on his knees, and looking into the fireplace so as to have his face away from the light. Miss Standish put her arm round her sister. "He died very easy," said Andy. "He was a bit off his head at times, but that was while the fever was on him. He didn't suffer much towards the end—I don't think he suffered at all. . . . He talked a lot about you and the children." (Andy was speaking very softly now.) "He said that you were not to fret, but to cheer up for the children's sake. . . . It was the biggest funeral ever seen round there."

Mrs Baker was crying softly. Andy got the packet half out of his pocket, but shoved it back again.

"The only thing that hurts me now," says Mrs Baker presently, "is to think of my poor husband buried out there in the lonely Bush, so far from home. It's—cruel!" and she was sobbing again.

"Oh, that's all right, Mrs Baker," said Andy, losing his head a little. "Ned will see to that. Ned is going to arrange to have him brought down and buried in Sydney." Which was about the first thing Andy had told her that evening that wasn't a lie. Ned had said he would do it as soon as he sold his wool.

"It's very kind indeed of Ned," sobbed Mrs Baker. "I'd never have dreamed he was so kind-hearted and thoughtful. I misjudged him all along. And that is all you have to tell me about poor Robert?"

"Yes," said Andy—then one of his "happy thoughts" struck him. "Except that he hoped you'd shift to Sydney, Mrs Baker, where you've got friends and relations. He thought it would be better for you and the children. He told me to tell you that."

"He was thoughtful up to the end," said Mrs Baker. "It was just like poor Robert—always thinking of me and the children. We are going to Sydney next week."

Andy looked relieved. We talked a little more, and Miss Standish wanted to make coffee for us, but we had to go and see to our horses. We got

up and bumped against each other, and got each other's hats, and promised Mrs Baker we'd come again.

"Thank you very much for coming," she said, shaking hands with us. "I feel much better now. You don't know how much you have relieved me. Now, mind, you have promised to come and see me again for the last time."

Andy caught her sister's eye and jerked his head towards the door to let her know he wanted to speak to her outside.

"Good-bye, Mrs Baker," he said, holding on to her hand. "And don't you fret. You've—you've got the children yet. It's—it's all for the best; and, besides, the Boss said you wasn't to fret." And he blundered out after me and Miss Standish.

She came out to the gate with us, and Andy gave her the packet.

"I want you to give that to her," he said; "it's his letters and papers. I hadn't the heart to give it to her, somehow."

"Tell me, Mr M'Culloch," she said. "You've kept something back—you haven't told her the truth. It would be better and safer for me to know. Was it an accident—or the drink?"

"It was the drink," said Andy. "I was going to tell

you—I thought it would be best to tell you. I had made up my mind to do it, but, somehow, I couldn't have done it if you hadn't asked me."

"Tell me all," she said. "It would be better for me to know."

"Come a little farther away from the house," said Andy. She came along the fence a piece with us, and Andy told her as much of the truth as he could.

"I'll hurry her off to Sydney," she said. "We can get away this week as well as next." Then she stood for a minute before us, breathing quickly, her hands behind her back and her eyes shining in the moonlight. She looked splendid.

"I want to thank you for her sake," she said quickly. "You are good men! I like the Bushmen! They are grand men—they are noble! I'll probably never see either of you again, so it doesn't matter," and she put her white hand on Andy's shoulder and kissed him fair and square on the mouth. "And you, too!" she said to me. I was taller than Andy, and had to stoop. "Good-bye!" she said, and ran to the gate and in, waving her hand to us. We lifted our hats again and turned down the road.

I don't think it did either of us any harm.

THE MOSLEM CONFRATERNITIES OF NORTH AFRICA.

BY WALTER B. HARRIS.

ALTHOUGH there need at present be no cause for alarm, yet the question of the increasing influence exerted by the Moslem religious confraternities of North Africa is one that cannot fail to interest England as well as France. The Egyptian Sudan has already passed through a period of war and bloodshed arising from the success of a religious fanatic, and it is the duty of the Powers interested in North Africa, from the Red Sea to the Atlantic, to prevent the recurrence of another such event.

It is true that in Lower Egypt there is little or no fear of a fanatical rising, for reasons that will be discussed anon; but the extending influence of England in the Sudan and in the Equatorial Provinces necessitates a careful watch on the actions and aspirations of these sects, any or all of which might some day unite in a common cause under the new influence of Pan-Islamism and set North Africa in a blaze.

The position of France in Algeria and Tunis is much more vulnerable than that of England in Egypt. In Tripoli on the east, and in Morocco on her west, there is ample opportunity for the fostering of fanatical risings, out of reach of discovery or punishment, while an adequate surveillance over the vast extent of Sahara that forms the hinterland of

Algeria and extends as far as the shore of Lake Chad—as far as Timbuctu and Senegal—is practically impossible. It is France, too, that is largely responsible for the later growth of these religious sects, for when she took possession of Algeria there existed, as there exist to-day in Morocco, a certain number of great families whose influence over the people was very considerable, and who, either by their religious descent, or by their wealth and possessions in land, formed, although not absolutely the governing class, at least the most powerful one. The great part of these men were Shereefs—that is to say, descendants of the Prophet Mohammed—and as such they claimed, and were allowed, great privileges. They were universally respected, not only as forming a superior and religious nobility, but also on account of their political influence, which acted as a medium between the secular governors of the country and the Arab and Kabyle tribes. Considered by their possession of the holy *baraka*—the birthright of the Shereefian descendants—as men to whom ordinary laws were not applicable, these great families, and more especially certain selected representatives of them, were possessed of extraordinary powers. Their advice was sought and followed

by the country people on every question, and their decisions were accepted as final in all cases of dispute, even though their verdict might often appear to be contrary to the unalterable laws of Islam. Not only did these Shereefs live beyond the reach of the civil law, they were even considered as meriting no punishment for their sins. "How can the fire of hell touch a saint in whose veins flows the blood of the holy Prophet?" is a common Arab argument. This immunity from the laws of God and man gave them unlimited opportunity — of which they were usually not slow to take advantage — to practise extortion and tyranny, "frailties" that were accepted in silence by the people, who saw, or imagined they saw, in every act and deed of these Shereefs the guidance of the hand of God. Existing principally upon the offerings brought to them and to the tombs of their ancestors by pious pilgrims, and upon a system of religious taxation, the Shereefian families formed an entire class apart, and though often enough thoroughly bad, they were not seldom of the greatest service in settling tribal and intertribal disputes, and preventing the shedding of blood.

To such a class European invasion foretold ruin, and it is little to be wondered at that with very few exceptions we find the Shereefs taking the lead in an attempt to prevent the extension of French conquest and French influence in Algeria—not, it must be under-

stood, on the grounds that such conquest and influences were particularly French, but on the larger plea that they were Christian. Most famous amongst the active enemies of France was Abdul Kader, who in later days showed, during the massacre of Christians in Damascus, where he was living in exile, such courage and sympathy, and by whose aid a very considerable number of lives were saved.

Two policies with regard to these great families lay open to the French on their occupation of Algeria, and unfortunately they chose the wrong one. These were either to ruin the influence and destroy the position of these Shereefs, and thus render them powerless for good or bad, or else by a more complacent policy to purchase their goodwill and retain them as a medium of communication between the Christian Government and a shy fanatical Moslem population. They chose the former, though even in those early days of the colony there were not wanting examples by which they should have appreciated how vastly useful could be the influence of the Shereefs, when properly applied. But the idea and aim of the conquering Power was too thorough to allow the necessity of intermediaries between the European Government and the African tribesman. It was the desire of France that the contact between ruler and ruled should be direct, and that the good system of government which she meant to give—and did give—should be felt and

appreciated by the Arab, without the necessity of interference. In inaugurating this policy the deathblow of the great and important families was struck, for it stands to reason that they could not survive upon the old footing, as being without the reach of the law, and with every opportunity for the practice of extortion. Nor could the pilgrimages of the faithful to their Shereefs be permitted without severe restrictions, for it was well known how largely sedition would be preached from these strongholds of discontent, and how, issuing from such a source, its hold upon the minds of the simple peasantry, ever ready to take up the cause of their religion, would be ineradicable. A good or a bad Government was, and is, to the Moslem a matter of comparatively little concern: he suits himself to either, and sees the will of God in both. But the heaven-directed words and acts of his Shereefs stir him to his inmost soul, and are capable of calling forth a spirit of rebellion that years and centuries of persecution by an unscrupulous Government—such as had existed in Algeria before the coming of the French, and such as exists in Morocco to-day—could never accomplish.

And so the great spiritual families fell into obscurity. Justifiable confiscations of their large properties as punishment for the part they had played in the struggles and risings against the French; the refusal of the new Government to permit the collection of *zerda* and

ziara—alms and religious taxes; the injunction against their travelling from place to place and tribe to tribe, stirring up religious zeal and collecting offerings as they went,—all these, and numberless other minor acts on the part of the conquerors, destroyed first the power and then the influence of the Shereefs.

Had there been at that time any other class to fall back upon—any other Moslem influence that the French might have exerted for the better pacification of the country, and in consequence its better contentment—this policy might have proved less dangerous than has been the case. But unfortunately they were only creating a void which it was impossible to fill, for the Government could offer no compensation for the great religious factor that they were removing. That the newly instituted *régime* was a good one, far better than any they had ever known previously, the people took as a matter of course; but every benefit thus gained was more than negatived by the fact that it was a Christian *régime*, and therefore a hateful institution. That their religious worship was left to them undisturbed caused them little satisfaction, for the native, in his ignorance and bigotry, believes that no Christian would incur the wrath of God by interfering with the Moslem faith. The average inhabitant of North Africa is firmly convinced that the Christian knows Islam to be the true faith, but is prevented from accepting it by a sort of

personal pride which will not allow of his confessing himself to be in the wrong.

Although formerly the natives had suffered from the extortion of their Shereefs, when these families were in the ascendant, they witnessed their decline and fall with more cordial detestation of the Christian than ever. With the decay of their spiritual nobility they lost their arbitrators and advisers, and they lost, too, what has proved even of greater importance, the element of mysticism which has always surrounded the descendants of the Prophet—almost the sole mysticism which the strict Maleki sect allows its followers. The void created by the disappearance of the Shereefs was not only a social one—it became a spiritual one; and in searching for a means to fill it, the people joined the then insignificant and innocuous Mohammedan confraternities, which now, grown to unparalleled dimensions, have honeycombed Algeria and all North Africa with vast secret societies religious in intention and political in effect.

The study of the introduction of these religious confraternities is apart from the subject here. Many of them arose in the early days of Islam, some even before the times of the Baghdad Khalifs, whose literary tastes and erudition introduced the ideas of Indian and Greek philosophy into a religion the principal attribute of which is its simplicity and its lack of imaginativeness. It may almost be

said that the sole want of judgment that Mohammed showed in originating the faith of Islam was in depriving his followers of what is so necessary to all oriental ideas and life, an environment of mysticism. But the want was soon supplied, for so prosaic a religion was irreconcilable with the traditions and characteristics of the nature of the Arabs. One of the first examples was the invention of the *baraka*—or holy birthright pertaining to the descendants of the Prophet—which helped not a little to cause the first great split in the religion—the separation of the Sunnis and Sheiyas. By the close of the second century A.H. the traditions of Pantheism and the learning of India and Greece had so far permeated the Mohammedan schools that there arose an old cult under a new name—Sufism—the traces of which exist to-day in every one of the sects and confraternities of North Africa.

More than the briefest idea of the doctrine of Sufism is impossible here, but brief as it is it will be sufficient to show how entirely it stands apart from any of the recognised orthodox doctrines of Islam.

To the Sufi the world is an illusion. It is merely a collection and massing together of the shapes and forms of things which have no real existence, being but the lights and shades of the reflection of the "essence" of the deity. Given this thesis, the Sufi considers that the highest ideal of life, and its ultimate aim, is the merging of all individuality in this vague

"essence" of the deity. It can well be imagined how a doctrine of such a character can be misunderstood and misconstrued amongst an ignorant people, and to-day, in the place of a pure Sufism, with its seeking after ideals, we find a number of sects, one and all founded on Sufism, but most erring far from its primitive aim. Yet the very incomprehensibility of those doctrines to the larger part of the people who have adopted them has given an enormous impetus to the success of the confraternities. The real philosophy has been lost, and its place has been taken by a belief, the more attractive in that it is inexplicable, that the repetition of certain prayers and extracts from the Koran has mystical powers tending to accomplish the aim in view—the effacement of the individuality. It is curious that no cabalistic forms are used in these *dikr* or formulæ, and that even to the most strict Moslem it would be difficult to find fault with the outward and visible form of the tenets of the confraternities. Yet though in North Africa the greater part of the population adhere to the orthodox Maleki school of Islam, these sects are so impregnated with Sufism, and even with Neo-Platonism, as to be, one and all, completely unorthodox.

These confraternities existed in North Africa long before the French conquests; but in a Mohammedan country, governed by Mohammedans, as in Morocco to-day, and, to some extent, in Tripoli, they were almost entirely religious, and

politics entered very slightly into their dealings. The Sher-eefian families still formed the courts of appeal for the native, who felt far less called upon to protect his interests, both spiritual and temporal, by joining one of these brotherhoods, than is now the case. But to-day he is left without his spiritual support. His intermediaries with heaven have disappeared, and he is like a child lost in the desert.

The propagandists saw their opportunity, and as the great families disappeared, they sowed their seed, preaching a pure Islam, at the same time drawing the population together into secretly united bands, which, under the cloak of innocuous religion, have become hotbeds of sedition and anti-European intrigue.

In order to realise the importance of these sects a few words are necessary as to their organisation, for they owe their strength principally to the system by which the various centres are kept in touch with one another, and obedience to supreme orders guaranteed.

Each confraternity has its central *zaouia* or sanctuary—where either the chief of the sect resides or the founder is buried. From this centre their policy is promulgated, and by means of subordinate *zaouias*—each under the charge of a spiritual "Sheikh" or "Mokaddem"—orders are passed on to the devotees. The larger *zaouias* consist usually of a group of buildings containing a mosque and quarters for the reception and entertaining of pilgrims,

and the education of the *tolba*, all of whom are kept supplied with food from the funds at the disposal of the local officials. It is at these *zaouias* that the initiation of devotees takes place, and that the followers of each sect gather together from time to time for religious intercourse and services. Scarcely a town exists in North Africa that does not possess the *zaouias* of at least half-a-dozen sects. All over the country districts, too, they are found, often consisting of only a thatched hut in the vicinity of some revered tomb, but none the less a spot of concentration for the devotees, and the object of many a long and weary pilgrimage.

To so great an extent have these sects spread their ramifications that the cult of Abdul Kader Jilani, whose tomb and principal *zaouia* are in Baghdad, possesses minor sanctuaries from the banks of the Ganges to the Atlantic coast of Morocco, from the towns of northern Turkey and Central Asia to Zanzibar and Timbuctu. In North Africa alone the initiated members of the sect certainly number 60,000 souls, and probably many more. Still more numerous, especially in North-West Africa, are the followers of the Taibíá sect, the actual head of which is Mulai el Arbi Ibn Abdesalam, the Shereef of Wazan. In Algeria alone the sum of the followers of the "Dar Dahmana"—as the cult is called—reaches some 25,000, and in Morocco they are equally strong. Their influence, how-

ever, extends very little to the east of Tunis.

It is not necessary that the "sheikhs" of the sects, or even the founder, should be descendants of the Prophet, though such is often the case. In some sects the choice of the supreme chief is elective, in some it is hereditary, as in the Wazan family. In others, again, it is neither elective nor hereditary, it being left to divine agency to disclose who the heaven-appointed sheikh may be. In this latter case, on the death of a sheikh, no move is made to name or discover his successor. In due time it "*becomes known*" that a certain devotee at a certain spot is the new chief, and he is at once accepted as the spiritual leader. He need perform no miracle; he need possess no mark or sign to disclose his calling; he may be, and generally is, of extreme poverty, and it is not necessary that he should have any personal qualifications, either religious or otherwise. There can be little doubt that this curious system of obtaining their religious sheikhs is but an example of the secrecy with which their plans are made and carried out, and that the man is really chosen by a secret council without even the knowledge of the individual himself. Word is secretly sent to the heads of the various minor *zaouias* that upon a certain day it should be announced to the faithful that a new sheikh has appeared at such and such a spot. So obedient are those responsible for these orders, that not a word leaks out before the stated

date. The frequenters of *zaouias* hundreds of miles apart obtain the information upon the same day, and the credulous people consider it a revelation from God. Even the chosen sheikh only learns of his promotion at the same time as it is known at the other extremity of the country. The Derkaoua are the principal confraternity who follow this course.

In the hands of the supreme chief lies the election of the minor sheikhs, who in turn have certain limited powers in nominating the "*Mokaddems*," or lesser officials, all of whom are usually permitted to perform the rites of the initiation of devotees, and all are agents for the collection of funds.

The general and public tenets of the sects are good enough. Chastity, patience, poverty, obedience, and prayer are the principal teachings, though the *derouich*, who abandons the world, and the *khoddam*, who is merely an adherent, follow different rules of life and conduct.

The importance to Europe of these North African sects depends entirely upon the political influence that they are able to exert. When left to themselves, as in Morocco, they consist of little more than religious institutions and brotherhoods, of which the concealed energies have not been called forth by circumstances. It is only where they come more directly in contact with Europeans and European influences that their essentially religious features become impregnated with anti-Christian policy. Yet

even there the large proportion of the devotees will truthfully say that they know no other purpose than their own salvation, forgetting that, if commanded by their superiors, they would only too readily add to this hope of salvation by deeds of violence. A *jehad*, or holy war, preached by the united sects of North Africa would be disastrous indeed.

It has always been the want of cohesion that has prevented the natives of North Africa from uniting in any great act or deed. The race-hatred between Berber and Arab burns fiercely as ever; and a like distrust is found to exist in a minor degree between tribe and tribe. This want of cohesion seems to be characteristic of the Arab race, and to such an extent is it found amongst their religious sects that it detracts from the danger that would be threatened were the confraternities to unite. Jealousy of each other's successes and wealth enters largely into the everyday life of the sectarians, and renders common action extremely improbable.

Happily for England, it is in Lower Egypt that the confraternities, although strongly represented, have least power. It is difficult to gauge their exact influence, but it can be stated with certainty that they are less powerful than they were a few centuries ago, whereas in Tunis and Algeria the exact contrary is the case. This is probably owing a good deal to the fact that the population of Lower Egypt is an unimaginative one, and more

especially an agricultural one. The vast resources of the soil give occupation to almost all the male population, and occupation is the enemy of fanaticism. Every man holds his stake, little or big, in the country, and is not inclined to lose it for an idea. The history of the people of Egypt from the earliest times has been one of oppression, and though Arabi Pasha succeeded in instilling some spirit of rebellion, the end was as it has ever been, and the Egyptian lost the day. He is not a pure Arab, and in him the strongest characteristics of the Arab race are absent. He takes his religion calmly, and allows himself only a few occasions in the year when he exceeds the bounds of everyday behaviour. He has his dervishes and his *khoutan*, but both show little of the wild spirit of independence and fanaticism exhibited by their co-religionists of North-West Africa. The Christian can stand in the mosque of Mohammed Ali in the citadel at Cairo on a holy feast-day, and watch the savage movements and the haggard faces of half-a-dozen sects of dervishes. In Meknas, in Morocco, woe betide the European who ventures into the streets on a day of a gathering of the Aissawa! At the great feast of Lower Egypt—a survival of the rites of ancient times adapted to Mohammedan ideas—a Christian can stroll about amongst the booths and shows of Tanta, and even enter the tomb of Sheikh el-Beidawi himself, without fear of molestation. In Morocco the country

for many miles round the tomb of Mulai Abdesalam in Beni Arros, within a day's ride of Tangier, is forbidden ground to the "infidel."

To what extent the Egyptian Government is cultivating a good understanding with these sects it is difficult to determine, but there is no doubt that there exist cordial relations between the authorities and one or two of the more important confraternities, more especially the "Badria." Certain it is that there is little or no active antagonism toward the existing Government on the part of the members of the brotherhoods. Although in Lower Egypt there is practical immunity from the dangers of the religious sects, the same, unfortunately, cannot be said of Upper Egypt. In the place of the unimaginative "fellah" the population consists of a race of men full of devotion for their religion, and of a temperament easily worked upon and influenced by the subtle insinuations of religious emissaries. It is there that the greatest care is necessary to avoid explosions of religious fanaticism. The able staff of men now engaged upon the organisation of the Sudan can be trusted to be on their guard. The fact that Sir Reginald Wingate is personally supervising the work relieves England of great anxiety, for he has shown in all his dealings with the native population from the day he arrived in Egypt the greatest tact and knowledge. The Egyptian Intelligence Department—an

example of what such departments should be—is of his creation.

How susceptible are the natives of Upper Egypt to such influences, and to what extent their fanaticism will reach, is well illustrated by the period of Mahdism through which that country has so lately passed. In spite of the havoc played by the Mahdi and his Khalifa, in spite of the ruin brought upon the whole country, the superstitious natives refused for long to believe that the new prophet was not the promised Mahdi, who had come to restore Islam and conquer the world. It was merely the outburst of the pent-up religious feelings of the people, worked upon by a clever and unscrupulous pretender. This obstacle to progress and the wellbeing of the people has happily been removed, but some compensating influence must take its place. To what extent the education of the sons of the sheikhs will counteract fanaticism it is impossible at present to state, but the fact that such education will not be allowed even to the slightest degree to interfere with the belief and practice of their religion will go far in its favour. It will be some years, however, before the good influence of this policy is generally appreciated, and meanwhile the religious factor that has been removed by the destruction of Mahdism will be replaced from some other source. With this idea in aim, the Sudan will be overrun with the emissaries of the larger confraternities, and

it is these that the Government must watch most carefully. At present the sects that appear to be making the most headway are the Senussia and the Kadria. In the former we have a great pending question in North Africa, though the writer has no hesitation in stating—and his inquiries have extended over several years, and been made in Egypt, Tripoli, Tunis, Algeria, and Morocco—that the actual force and power of the Senussi's sect has been grossly exaggerated. It should be the object of the Sudan Government, by a skilful policy, such as the French are beginning to introduce, especially in Western Algeria, so to bring about a balance of power and influence between the sects as to render one and all practically innocuous. It is essentially an oriental policy. It is the policy by which the Sultan of Morocco defends himself from his own tribes and from the European Powers—the policy of the balance of jealousies.

The most celebrated at the present moment, although the most modern, of all the sects of North Africa, is that of the "Senussia." Sid Mohammed ibn Ali es-Senussi, the founder of the sect, was a native of Mostaganem in Algeria, where he was born in 1791-92. He travelled much, and spent some years of study at the Kairuin mosque at Fez. It was there, no doubt, that he obtained the puritanical ideas that play so important a part in his doctrine. The Maleki school, still found in its strictest form in the universities of Morocco,

could not fail to have impressed the scholar; while his journeys to the East, and more especially his sojourn in Cairo—where he was accused of unorthodoxy by the Sheikh el-Islam—and in Mecca, brought him in touch with the Sufis. There seems to have been present in his original idea, and it is equally apparent to-day in the teaching of his successor, a great desire to unite the various sects into one powerful pan-Islamic confraternity, with the ultimate aim, far more religious than political, of the reconstruction of the Imamatus and the purification of the Mohammedan faith. Whether the elder Senussi ever realised what a vast political force the success of his scheme would place in his hands seems very doubtful, and careful study inclines the writer to vindicate both the founder of the sect and his son and successor, the present Sheikh el-Mahdi, from any attempt to aspire to political or temporal power. The simple lives lived by both the Senussis, the intense religious fervour of father and son, point to the absolutely genuinely religious object in view. Had either of them striven for temporal power he could easily have achieved it; but such is not the case. The Sheikh Senussi, whether at Djar'bub, at Kufra, or at Gouro, has resided, and resides to-day, in an odour of sanctity in his *zaouia*, scarcely ever visible even to his most trusted followers, surrounded by spiritual mysticism, and living more the life of a hermit than that of perhaps the

most influential personage in North Africa.

The original *zaouia* of the sect was founded at Beida in Tripoli in 1843, and here the doctrine was first taught to the North Africans. Thence the Senussi moved to Djar'bub near the Egyptian frontier of Tripoli, some two days' journey from Siwah. It was at Djar'bub that the elder Senussi died and was buried in 1859. Sheikh el-Mahdi, his son, continued to reside at this oasis for some time, but the proximity of Turkish garrisons at Benghazi and Tripoli, and of the Egyptian frontier, persuaded him to move southwards, and he took up his residence first in the Kufra oasis, and then at Gouro, to the north of the province of Wadai. The success of a doctrine which contained the principles of ten important sects, and which could be adopted by all of them without upsetting their existing religious ideas, was soon assured, and throughout all Tripoli, and away to the confines of the Sudan and Morocco, *zaouias* arose.

It is a curious fact that the Arab mind has seldom been deeply stirred by the extravagances of religion. The great movements have been with few exceptions puritanical and self-denying; and so it is with Senussism. Like the cult of the Wahabis, it deducts from, rather than adds to, the status of religion, but unlike Wahabism it leaves to the native some of the traditions of his people, notably the reverence for, and pilgrimages to, the tombs of

saints. Dancing, music, smoking, and coffee are strictly forbidden, as being contrary to the spirit if not to the letter of the Koran. In contradiction to this strict enforcement of orthodoxy, mystic ideas of Sufism are not wanting. Yet the Senussi allows his followers no direct doctrine of mysticism. He preaches repentance and abstention; the mysticism he keeps for himself. It is he only who has reached the stage, through the perfection of knowledge, in which he can dictate to his people, and he holds out no hope, no matter how pure the life may be, of any other mortal reaching a parallel perfection. While he is reported to perform miracles there is no evidence that he lays credit to such powers, nor that he has ever claimed to be the promised Mahdi. The stories current, more in the magazines and newspapers of Europe than in North Africa, that the Senussi has collected enormous stores of arms and ammunition, can be dismissed as fables. He possesses no army, scarcely a retinue. His sole force and power is his own prestige, and the missionary enterprise of his devotees, who carry his reputation all over North Africa. His name is known and honoured by millions, but these millions are scattered over thousands of oases and separated by thousands of miles. The Berber and the Arab, deadly enemies of each other, each reverence him, but the idea of a vast united movement is preposterous. Religion may be able to do much to heal

open wounds, but the hatred and jealousy of the two rival native races of North Africa are incurable.

The dweller in the oasis, whether Arab or Berber, is ever shy of leaving it. His supposed love of wandering is mythical, for the inhabitant of the desert is of all men in the world the most attached to his native soil. His cultivated patch of fertile oasis, with its few villages, is bounded by the wildest deserts of sand, which, until he is driven out by the fact that the produce of the oasis is not sufficient to maintain more than a certain number of lives, he never dares to pass. Even the caravanmen of the desert are seldom from the oases, but usually from the fertile districts or the towns. That the Senussi could raise an effective army of these people is impossible. Experience has taught them that to go out from their homes in the hopes of a successful *jihad*—holy war—is a fatal policy, for it leaves their women and their cattle an easy prey to the next tribe, or to any band of marauders who may chance to seize the opportunity to loot the village.

But there is a vast district where the influence of the Senussi may eventually build him up an empire—in Northern Central Africa; for none knows better than he that any attempt to drive the English from Egypt or the French from Tunis and Algeria must surely fail, and that his barbarous hordes of ill-armed devotees, even could he raise an army, would be no match for

the "infidel." Granted that he could collect such a host of men, how could he move it across a thousand miles of desert, in which the few oases that exist are scarcely capable of maintaining the lives of their scant populations, much less supply provisions and fodder for so great an influx. With even the most modern systems of transport and commissariat it would be a work of the greatest difficulty to move an army across the Sahara. The water of the wells would run dry before a hundredth part of the men and beasts had quenched their thirst. It is to the south that Senussi's possibilities lie, in the great northern districts of Central Equatorial Africa, extending from Bahr el Ghazal to Lake Chad. They are regions rich in food, and inhabited by races which have been ever ready to accept the teaching of Islam, and ever liable to suffer oppression at the hands of those who taught it. Amongst them Senussism has already made very considerable strides, and it is possible that the renewed resistance which the French have been experiencing in the west of these districts may be due to Senussi influence. It is a religious movement which may eventually threaten the Egyptian Sudan from the west, a movement against which the Government must be prepared some day, either by local diplomacy or by force, to make a stand. But it is the French Sudan and the northern limits of the Congo Free State that would suffer more directly,

though a vast Senussi empire on such a powerful spiritual basis would certainly threaten all the Powers who own territory and have interests in those regions. It is a curious fact that no reliable evidence has ever been produced to prove that the Senussi doctrine is in any especial form outwardly antagonistic to Christians, and there have been several examples of courtesy, and even kindness and hospitality, shown to them by the officials of the *zaouias* of the sect. Even amongst the mass of documents and letters which have from time to time fallen into the hands of the French Intelligence Department in Algeria, nothing has ever been discovered inciting the devotee to anti-Christian policy, much less to anti-Christian action.

By the Turks the Senussis are much respected, and the country round Benghazi and Tripoli has become far more safe than was the case before the *zaouias* were founded. A caravan under Senussi guidance can travel the Eastern Sahara from end to end without fear of molestation or annoyance. What Turkish arms failed to accomplish the reputation of a spiritual chief has brought about.

While the cult has carried everything before it in the province of Benghazi, and to a less extent in Tripoli, its success has been less marked farther west. In Tunis, for example, it has taken little hold. In Southern Algeria, as far as the oases of Twat, it

exerts some authority, though the French estimate the total number of followers in all Algeria at only 1200. In Morocco, already filled with a plethora of sects, its progress has been almost nil, and, with the exception of one at Fez and in a few desert oases, no *zaouias* exist. That founded in the Marakesh has lately been closed for want of funds.

The system by which the French Government has been able to check the undue spread of Senussi influence in the North-west Sahara—a district they are desirous of opening up at the present time—is what has been already described as the policy of the balance of jealousies: that is to say, as the Senussis gradually increased their influence in these districts, the French encouraged the rival sects, more especially that of the “Taibía,” or followers of the Shereefs of Wazan, the chief of whom, Mulai el Arbi, although living at Wazan in Moorish territory, is a French subject. Nor has France failed to give support from time to time to the Derkaoua, which in that district forms the largest and most important of the local confraternities. The principal desert oasis of this sect is at Medaghra, not far from Tafilet, and within reach of indirect French influence.

It is a policy at once successful and worthy of every commendation, for there is little doubt that through its agency much loss of life and destruc-

tion of property is avoided. It has checkmated Senussism in a part of North Africa where the nature of the tribes and their environment render them particularly susceptible to religious influences. Of no political importance, though curious enough to be recorded here, is the *dikr*, or initiation formula of the Senussi sect. The words are simple and strictly orthodox, and the only trace of Sufi influence is in the number of times which each sentence has to be repeated. These numbers possess curious hidden meanings, known only by the sheikh Senussi himself. It is sufficient for his followers that they practise obedience. For them the mystery can never be unlocked; the master alone holds the key. The *dikr* is as follows. The devotee must repeat—

- (i) 40 times—“Bless me, O Lord, in the hour of death and in the trials after death.”
- (ii) 100 times—“I have recourse to the pardon of God.”
- (iii) 100 times—“There is no God but God.”
- (iv) 100 times—“O God, bestow Thy pardon upon our lord the illustrious Prophet, and upon his family and upon his companions, and grant them peace.”

There remains still one other prayer—the following—which must only be repeated in perfect privacy, and the secret of which must be most strictly guarded: “There is no God but

God. In every manner may God bestow His blessings upon our lord Mohammed, to a number of times as impossible to count as the immensity of heaven is immeasurable."

It is unnecessary here to refer particularly to any other of the sects and cults, of which there are an almost endless number. Their origins and their tenets are to the uninitiated much alike, though the little differences in the formulæ, or in the position taken by the devotee at prayer, may appear to the simple and devout follower matters of vital importance. To so large an extent do the Moslems struggle over the splitting of a hair that one of the sects is divided into two distinct bodies on the question of whether the rosary should be carried in the hand or worn round the neck — and each

section looks upon the other as hopelessly unorthodox.

In conclusion, the writer's purpose in calling attention to the numbers and influence of these sects is not from a desire to alarm; but at the same time it should be borne in mind that the danger does exist. That there has been lately the least sign of outbreak, or of increased religious fanaticism, is as incorrect as are the alarmist reports regarding the Senussi's power and ultimate aims. It is probable, indeed, that a crisis may never arise; but this result is more likely to be assured by carefully watching the situation than by neglecting to do so, and it is the duty of France and England to unite in guarding their North African interests from what may become some day the common enemy of both nations.

MUSINGS WITHOUT METHOD.

THE MURDER OF WILLIAM MCKINLEY — AMERICA'S WISE AND SIMPLE PRESIDENT—ANARCHY WICKEDLY EXCUSED—THE CANT OF "POLITICAL CRIME"—HOW TO TREAT ANARCHISTS—AN IMPRISONED EMPEROR—THE CENSORSHIP OF THE PRESS—FRENCH AND ENGLISH—A BETTER KNOWLEDGE ACROSS THE CHANNEL—M. CHEVRILLON'S INTELLIGENT APPRECIATION.

THE cruel murder of William McKinley reminds us that Anarchy is still a living and a working terror. Not only was it cruel—it was purposeless, even for an anarchistic outrage. The President of the United States represents neither privilege nor tyranny. He is not a ruler whose indolence the people is asked to support by unequal taxes; he is not the member of a sheltered family, which claims a high office by virtue of exalted birth. He is but a citizen, like the rest, and, as the world knows, the door of the White House stands open to all comers. Moreover there is no American so poor but he may arrive at the President's throne, upon which none ever sits without discovering that he is the servant, not the master, of the people. Nor is there any episode in McKinley's career which should condone or explain an act of vengeance. Throughout his double term of office he has served his country by faithfully representing the majority. His policy of protection was popular, because it made America instantly prosperous. The war with Spain was not a war of his devising; had he been free to follow his own discretion he would have

ensured peace by diplomacy or by gold. He was incapable of echoing such cries as "Remember the Maine!" or of appealing to the quickly roused hysteria of his countrymen. But no sooner was war inevitable than he assured its vigorous conduct, and so carried out with energy and effectiveness the will of the people. Nor was he following a personal inclination when he committed America to a policy of imperialism. The expansion which has followed the war with Spain does but express the natural desire of a free and prosperous nation for an empire beyond its own borders. In brief, William McKinley accomplished nothing in his years of office which was not consonant with the wishes of the majority. He had so little of the dictator in his nature that he did not disdain to use the machinery of wards and bosses by which the politics of America are administered. And if his methods of government violated no popular principle, his career should have endeared him to all citizens of the States. For if he could not boast, like Garfield, a passage "from log-cabin to White House," he was not aided in his progress by any

advantages of birth or position. A post-office clerk when the war broke out, he volunteered for service, was a captain at twenty-one, and retired a major honourably distinguished by Abraham Lincoln. A few years of the law gave him a competence, and from the age of twenty-eight he pursued the profession of politics with single-minded energy. Of course it would be unkind, as well as unjust, to compare him with the heroic Presidents, Washington and Lincoln. He was never called upon to perform such feats as theirs. But whatever duty fell to him he accomplished with dignified simplicity. In the eyes of Europe he was the worthy representative of a great country. In the eyes of America he was a faithful unselfish champion of national interests. So scrupulous was he of his honour that he avoided the merest suspicion of speculation, and though he was thought by many to be unduly kind to trusts, he has died a poor man. His modest will, in truth, is an eloquent testimony to his upright conduct of affairs. Though he has enjoyed for many years the highest dignities of state, he leaves but a few thousands of pounds to his widow; and he has practised this splendid self-denial in a country which not only worships the millionaire, but which finds Boss Croker an indispensable instrument of government.

If, then, we attempt to explain the murder of President McKinley by his actions, we involve ourselves in an impene-

trable mystery. Nobody can pretend for an instant that this wise, simple, honourable, and modest citizen was a proper target for the assassin's bullet. Yet no sooner was the news of the cowardly outrage received, than the Radical papers began with one accord to make excuses for the miscreant. The best method of abolishing Anarchy, said they, with a veiled satisfaction in the death of a statesman, is to abolish its cause. And straightway they fell upon the usual common-places of their sect, higher wages and less work for the unskilled, the pampering of the lazy, and the instant ruin of those who dare to be industrious and useful citizens. But the Radicals talk idly when they declare that Anarchy is the effect of so obvious a cause as hunger or political discontent. President McKinley died not because he represented bad government, nor even because he represented government at all. He died because he seemed a conspicuous citizen to the weak-brained, uncontrolled scoundrel who slew him. But we shall never find a proper remedy for Anarchism until we understand what an Anarchist is, and what he wants. He is an indolent monster, diseased with vanity, whose first and last desire is advertisement. He has no practical aim, no definite ambition. He knows that when he has slain one ruler, good or bad, another will arise; he knows also that so long as he and his friends live policemen will be a patent necessity. He knows all this,

or he would know it, if thirst for publicity had left any space for knowledge in his narrow brain. It is not wrong that goads him to revenge, for he is as often as not well supplied with the things which make life pleasant, and the money which shall purchase the instruments of his crime are seldom lacking to him. He travels at will from one end of the earth to the other, generally accompanied by a mistress, and when he has driven home his dagger, thrown his bomb, or pulled the trigger of his pistol, he is aureoled with glory, in whose reflected light his companions proudly bask.

He is, moreover, gregarious: he loves clubs, associations, and strange brotherhoods. Pass-words and secret signs appeal to that love of mystery in him which always afflicts the feeble-minded. When he visits a foreign city, he is consigned to some comrade or another with whom he may exchange those platitudes of murder and sentiment upon which his intellect is fed; and thus it is that he gives us a hold upon him. His vanity will seldom let him "work" alone, and nothing absolutely ensures secrecy save solitude. Indeed, no sooner has he entered a club than he is a marked man, and, if our laws permitted us, we could very soon render him incapable of harm.

But unhappily the law is on the side of the Anarchist. By the wildest irony the contemner of all constitutions is protected in his murderous contempt by

the most enlightened constitutions of the world. For the Anarchist's peculiar benefit a monstrous contradictory contrivance is tolerated, called "political crime." The Anarchist did not invent it; it may trace its origin to the cult (once popular) of abstract freedom. No man, it was proudly said, shall suffer for his opinions, and indeed the principle was sound enough with a limitation. There is no reason why any one should be punished for holding opinions which do not conflict with the common law of his land. But no man should be permitted to express an opinion in favour of plunder or assassination. Directly an agitator exhorts to unlawful action, he loses all touch with politics and becomes a sordid criminal. No sooner does a demagogue, proud in his opinion, advocate a breach of the law, than he puts himself upon a level with the house-breaker's accessory. In brief, there is no such thing as "political crime," of which the very name is hypocritical. On the one hand there is obedience to the law, on the other there is lawlessness; and the understanding of this principle is the first step in the suppression of Anarchy.

And even if "political crime" were not a palpable contradiction, it ought to be punished far more heavily than any other; for punishment should be apportioned according to temptation and to the ease wherewith the crime is committed. Forgery is heavily punished, because it is not beyond the

reach of any man who can hold a pen ; and though hunger is no excuse for theft, it is, at any rate, an obvious temptation. Now, if we apply this principle to what is absurdly called "political crime," we see at once that a miscreant who murders with no better excuse than a political opinion should expect no mercy, and that the ease wherewith the life of king or president may be attempted should ensure a special penalty even for failure.

But the Anarchist, taking shelter behind the empty phrase "political crime," enjoys a licence which is granted to no other criminal. He may advertise his intentions ; he may publicly incite his followers. If two ruffians are overheard planning the murder of Bill Smith, they may be summarily arrested. If a burglar be found with the implements of his trade upon him, he is already a malefactor. But there are still countries where an Anarchist may publish open incitements to murder in his journals and escape the smallest censure. The head of a State, indeed, whose life is more valuable than the life of Bill Smith, has asked in vain for the common protection. In the past England has been a conspicuous offender. We have boasted with a sort of cant that London is free to all policies, that deposed monarchs or escaped king-slayers find equal asylum in our midst. However, the harm we have done in the past by our ill-judged devotion to a philosophic principle is partly condoned by the very efficient

watch we now keep upon the apostles of Anarchy. That our method is the best we would not assert ; but until sterner measures are taken Inspector Melville's device is not to be despised. True, the Anarchists are allowed the freedom of Soho, but it is a freedom sternly tempered by the knowledge and control of Inspector Melville. The Anarchists frequent their *cafés* and attend their clubs, under the wise restriction that all they say is known to a vigilant police. With the worst intention in the world, they can do nothing, for once they move they are checked on the threshold of action, and then a prison receives them. Often, indeed, the police is their only friend, and not many years since two noble specimens — America's gift to England — were forced to demand of the detective who watched them that he should write their letters and announce their return. But the fly is not always safe, even in the spider's web ; and we would sleep more easily if we knew that dangerous Anarchists were shut behind a firmer barrier than the vigilance of the police.

Moreover, it is idle for England to watch, if other countries are guilty of carelessness. When the imbecile Sipido shot at the Prince of Wales, Belgium set an example of levity which was a patent encouragement to all Anarchists. Nor is England likely to forget it. But America, herself so sternly tried, has long been the worst offender. The ideal of freedom and brotherhood which in-

duced her to harbour Fenians has been shamefully turned against her; yet it should be remembered that she was not the first to suffer. The wretched Bresci, who murdered the King of Italy, received his education in New Jersey. It was New Jersey, also, which defended his action, and held it up for emulation to his comrades and compatriots. But America left the conspirators of Paterson free and at large; and probably her laws will prevent her from punishing Miss Goldman, whose speeches seem to have armed the miserable Czolgosz. Two days after McKinley was shot, a well-known Anarchist left New Hampshire, if Reuter may be believed, with the avowed intention of shooting Mr Roosevelt. Yet he could not be arrested, and the police had done its duty when it had warned New York of his approach. In brief, no ruler can be safe until the ancient superstition of "political crime" be swept away.

And while McKinley has been assassinated, the Czar of Russia has visited France, a close prisoner guarded by forty thousand men. He was seen by few except soldiers, and though a love of symbolism may be satisfied by a dim consciousness that the Czar is there, the perilous expedition reduces to an absurdity the position of kings. Of what use is empire if it delivers him who wields it bound hand and foot to his jailers? Are loyal citizens so feeble that their wishes are

always to be thwarted by an active minority? We do not believe they are, and surely the kingdoms of the earth need not surrender to knife and pistol without a struggle. Much may be done by concerted action, and if all nations persisted in moving Anarchists on, the danger would be sensibly lessened. When a riot is feared in the streets, the hopes of the rioters are easily foiled by a simple expedient. Nobody is permitted to stand still, and the collection of a crowd is thus impossible. Let us apply this sound principle to Anarchists. The most of them are known to the police. Let them be driven from their homes; let them be forbidden to meet; and when they have found another domicile, let them be sent adrift again, until they renounce their superstition and take refuge in work. Murder being their game, it should be a sin to harbour them, as it is a sin to harbour the criminal who from greed or passion hopes to kill a helpless victim. No mercy should be shown them who show none to others, and not one single country — no Belgium nor Switzerland — should be allowed by the Powers to offer them protection. If this step were taken, we should hear little more of Anarchy, for the laziest, most brutal assassin shrinks from playing the part of the Wandering Jew.

But there are other means of checking this organised system of murder. The Anarchists, having no chin, and very little (when not too much) forehead, are easily led, and it

should be the purpose of our rulers to ensure that they are not led at all. Their newspapers should be rigorously suppressed, nor should the police wait for an open declaration of murder before they seize their treasonable presses. But the suppression of a newspaper is a serious difficulty. If there is one thing in which enlightened people believe more devoutly than in "political crime," it is a free printing-press. Only one check is placed upon the ingenuity of our printers. So long as they are not obscene, any freedom seems permitted to them. Yet, dangerous as obscenity may be, no moralist can pretend that it does more harm than incitements to murder. Robespierre, we think, was a more loathsome criminal than the Marquis de Sade; at any rate he had far more opportunity of wrong-doing; and if Anarchy is to be suppressed, we must put sedition on the same footing as obscenity. No Radical paper must be allowed to find excuses for Anarchy; no Republican editor must be permitted to condone the murder of kings. The censorship which exists in law must be rigorously enforced in fact; and who knows but some day the Czar of Russia may leave his palace without trembling for his life!

However, it is not merely the prints which exist for sedition that are a menace to the State. Of late years the whole press of the world has claimed a dangerous and deplorable licence. It has been wisely pointed out that the

Yellow Press of New York is not guiltless of McKinley's murder. The ignorant and youthful editors, who day after day have insulted the elected ruler of their country, have helped to arm the assassin's hand. Nor is there any doubt that our own press is similarly culpable. Anarchy, after all, is a form of hysteria, and to provoke hysteria is the avowed object of our modern journals. The newspaper which cannot be content without a daily sensation, which does not trouble to sift its news, and so publicly makes truth of no account, is not guiltless of crime. The law protects it, that is true; but the opinion of all just men should fiercely condemn it. Nor is there any reason why the law should not control the press. If our enactments are not stringent enough, legislation is still possible. The worst is, that the press is a fetich, like political crime. Some fool invented the phrase "the fourth estate," and other fools have believed that the press is a decent and a definite power. Politicians, in fact, have so loyally supported the freedom of journalists to misguide, that one suspects an unconscious black-mail. Says the politician: "If I say a word in the journalists' disfavour, they will all attack me in their privileged columns"; and so the politician is content to soothe himself with the generous dream that a free, untrammelled press is a noble institution. But why should it be noble? It owes responsibility to none save the purse. Its constant

excuse for its indiscretions is that it gives the public what the public wants—an excuse which is nothing more nor less than Anarchy. The public wants a thousand things which the law properly withholds, and the journalist who shelters his sins behind the popular demand confesses himself the enemy of his country. He knows that Anarchy is a disease of the nerves, and yet he does not scruple by cunning methods of excitement to destroy the already weakened nerves of his foolish readers. The law, as we have said, might check the falsehood and hysteria of the press, as it might, if it chose, abolish it utterly. But the law, we fear, will never be moved against a newspaper. Any man who has no better credential than a balance at his bank may buy a printing-machine; and with that implement of sin to help him, he may grow rich by deceiving a credulous people, which has not yet learned that all which it sees in print is not necessarily true.

Though we cannot silence the extravagant tone of our press, at least we may discourage it. But the fight will be fought against the fearsome odds of an innumerable circulation. What can a hundred or a thousand good men achieve in the face of a million dolts? They can decrease the precious circulation by a few: they can throw some discredit upon the disseminator of the false. Yet the victory cannot be won until there is a national reaction. Nor need we despair of the re-

action, which is indeed inevitable. The half-educated mob which the Board School turns out, ready for any villainy, will some day be ambitious to learn a little more, or content to learn a little less, and the popular press, with its unplumbed ignorance, its boastful readiness to rule the world, and its hideous familiarity, will disappear from our midst. The change will assuredly come; but until it comes we must expect to see the weakling's hand armed against our rulers. Perpetual excitement may still throw the feeble mind off its balance; the bitter abuse of a statesman, who happens to have annoyed an irresponsible journalist, may at any moment suggest a useless crime. But happily the pendulum of taste and opinion is wont to swing back, and time may rid us of a disease which our politicians are afraid to cure. Meanwhile we have witnessed the failure of popular government. The peoples which boast of universal suffrage, and which throw their palaces open to the lowliest-born, cannot protect the lives of their elect. France and America, indeed, are no better off than autocratic Russia. For while the Czar travels, the close prisoner of forty thousand soldiers, Carnot and McKinley have fallen in the citizens' field of battle, victims to the superstitions of free thought and "political crime."

The visit of her "great ally" to the shores of France is a pleasant symbol of international

friendship, which no other nation will contemplate with suspicion. Least of all need England withhold such congratulation as France expects. The rumours of Franco-Russian interference in South Africa are the common inventions of a sensational press, and if MM. Rochefort and Drumont find it useful to insult England, let us remember that they find it useful also to insult France. There is, indeed, and has always been, a curious contradiction in the sentiments which unite (or dis sever) England and France. Even when political ambitions have divided us, the Channel has not for long separated our intellectual interests. Since the fifteenth century our literatures have followed the same (or a similar) line of development. Now we have given the lead, now we have taken it; and though the giants on either side the Channel have escaped imitation, the arts of England and France have been and are closely allied. The first inspiration came from France, where Chaucer, travelling in the train of princes, learned the first lessons of his art; and how great was the debt we may realise when we reflect what English literature would have been without the supreme example of the 'Canterbury Tales' in poetry as in narrative. Shakespeare, though he has since been discovered by the journalists of France, appeared even to Voltaire as a barbarian, pretty much indeed as Walt Whitman appears to us. But this lack of appreciation may easily be explained. Shakespeare is the

English genius incarnate, stern, fateful, and difficult in expression. The French are as puzzled at his bold presentation of the elemental emotions as at his unclipped luxuriance of illustration. But, on the other hand, Englishmen most doggedly misunderstand the masterpieces of Racine, whose logical order, symmetrical verse, and well-arranged emotions appear vivid to their romantic temperament. However, when we returned to the cult of "good sense" we returned in the wake of France, and Pope and Bolingbroke, to name but these, both felt a foreign influence. But in revenge the Romantic movement, which created the literature of modern Europe, was English alike in origin and thought, and Paris, which had already bowed the knee to Richardson, loyally acknowledged the influence of Sir Walter Scott. Then came Balzac and Dumas, who repaid the debt a thousandfold; and it is pleasant to think that the two countries of Europe, who have most often met as honourable foes upon the field of battle, have pursued the art of letters with the same ambition and to the same end.

But most strange is it that to-day, when political rancour is at its bitterest, England and France should have signed a closer treaty of literature than ever was signed before. The barriers of sea and language seem to have been broken down. The ancient prejudices, so dear to Victor Hugo, survive only in such unimportant persons as M. Sardou, who does not know where England is, and who is

quite sure that he would hate it if he saw it. Even the splendid ignorance which Frenchmen cherished of England for so many centuries is wellnigh abolished, and England and France can exchange intelligent criticism in the consciousness that only a few hours and not many shillings separate their capitals. It may be said without boasting that all educated Englishmen can read French. Balzac and Flaubert, Zola and Daudet, are familiar to us all; and stranger still, the names of English writers are to-day better known in France than ever they were. Our policy is denounced every day in the French journals as a policy of bandits; the leader-writer of the cheap press, as ignorant in Paris as in London, emulates the sublime folly of M. Sardou, and abuses the country of which he proudly boasts he knows nothing. That is in the old spirit of Victor Hugo. But the more intelligent writers of France know perfectly well what is being said and thought in London. Mr Meredith is familiar, at least in name, to hundreds of Parisians. He is not understood, nor will he be, until he is translated; but a French version of 'The Egoist' is imminent, and we may yet detect his influence in the next generation of French novelists. Meantime Pater is known in all the *cénacles*, while Stevenson and Kipling, if they have missed a popular success, have conquered a new continent of readers. But, apart from translation, a better understanding of English

literature has been made possible by intelligent criticism. English literature owes a debt of gratitude to M. Davray, who in the columns of the 'Mercure de France' has told the cultured ones of Paris what to think of English writers. It is a thankless task to explain to an indifferent audience the merits of a literature which the majority cannot read. Yet M. Davray has fulfilled the duty of interpretation with a tact and a sympathy which are beyond praise. And he has not stayed his hand at criticism. He has backed his fancy, so to say, and translated a whole library of English books into an elegant French, which the originals do not always merit.

In fact, France is wiping away the old reproach that even her critics know no word of English. And while in the world of politics Anglophobia is more violently rampant than ever, in the world of letters a mild Anglomania is universally tolerated. But understanding is always more precious than admiration, and we have seen no book of late which pleases us better than M. André Chevrillon's 'Études Anglaises.' Now, M. Chevrillon is evidently a disciple of Taine, and therefore a philosopher. His appreciation of the English language is remarkable, and we doubt whether the master, accomplished as he was in taking large views, ever understood the delicate shades as accurately as the pupil. His essay on Mr Rudyard Kipling is a masterpiece of criticism. M. Chevrillon

interprets the difficult lingo of Mr Kipling with ease and justice. He has a correct intuition of the writer's temperament and ambition, nor could he have arrived at so admirable a result without a keen feeling for English literature and its achievements. Excellent, too, with a limitation, is M. Chevrillon's essay on "English Opinion and the War." Here, at last, is a Frenchman who can speak of the English and the Boers without an explosion of ignorant fury, and M. Chevrillon's moderation is a wholesome sign for the future. Moreover, his moderation is the more significant because he is not wholly sympathetic. He does not see, what his master would have grasped at once, that the arguments advanced on one side or the other are unimportant — that the English and Boers are fighting, not for the franchise, not for the gold-mines, but for national supremacy. Kruger's armaments were collected to be used, and no sooner had the famous piano-cases travelled north than war was inevitable. This the acute M. Taine would have seen; this M. Chevrillon just misses, as he omits also to point out the worthlessness of the journals which he quotes, posters and all, as symptoms of English opinion. None the less, his essay is remarkable, since it was written by a Frenchman; and if only M. Chevrillon's compatriots would read this intelligent book we should have a certain confidence that more than one dark corner of ignorance would be effectively illuminated.

But nowadays even the journalists of France understand English, and here is M. Legras offering his opinion with easy confidence. His book, '*Chez nos Contemporains d'Angleterre*,' is pert, assured, and half-intelligent. Of course M. Legras does not look below the surface, and his taste does not permit him to take just views. But he has read the '*Contemporains*' whom he discusses, and though he misunderstands the works of most, he has still a vague notion of their meaning. His mistakes, in fact, are not the mistakes of the Frenchman, but of the journalist. What he says of Mr Meredith might have been said by the most British of Fleet Streeters. He does not understand the author of '*The Egoist*,' and being a journalist he thinks that the misunderstanding is not his fault, but Mr Meredith's. Again, he classes Mr Arthur Morison with Mr G. Moore among those who have attempted "*le frayer les voies à l'école nouvelle*," which clumsy classification proves that he cannot look very far beyond the subject of a novel. But it is in his eulogy of Mr Pinero that he most clearly reveals his ignorance. Praise, withheld from Mr Meredith, is generously lavished upon the author of "*The Gay Lord Quex*." Mr Meredith, it is objected, has never had a popular success, while "*The Second Mrs Tanqueray*" has been played three hundred times, which proves not that Mr Pinero is Mr Meredith's superior, but that M. Legras is a journalist in grain. However, he freely

confesses on another page that while there are degrees of beauty, a Pinero often touches the absolute.

But the truth is, that while M. Legras understands English, he does not understand literature, and therefore his book is merely interesting because it shows that there are Frenchmen to-day who dare not only cross the Channel, but are not afraid to approach the threshold of our speech. Indeed, M. Legras would probably criticise the writers of France with as little intelligence as he brings to the consideration of English literature. There is more humour than he knows in the pronouncement that Mr Lang "disdains the living and dramatic presentation of facts, dear to M. Filon." This juxtaposition is most unhappy. Mr Lang is a master of style as well as a historian, while M. Filon is a gentleman who has spent many years in misunderstanding the country wherein he lives, and who cannot be complimented upon the elegance of his language. But M. Legras gives the best measure of his talent in an appendix, in which he sets out to prove that 'Little Arthur's History of England' and some other text-books do less than justice to

than justice to Wellington. "I hope," says he, "to furnish on this subject a serious document." Alas! he only furnishes a proof that he himself lacks humour. The school-books of no country are eminent for accuracy, and "Little Arthur" may be forgiven if the Black Prince is of more interest to him than Duguesclin. Doubtless "le petit Pierre" finds more entertainment in Duguesclin, and we should never blame his preference. The fact is that school-books cannot be impartial, nor can they embody the result of the latest researches. But M. Legras need not despair of England, nor of "Little Arthur," whom on this side the Channel we scarcely know. He has only to study the school-books of his own country, especially those prepared under the auspices of the Church, and he may be brought to believe, by a process of reaction, with the "Student's Hume," that Marlborough really did win the battle of Blenheim. But this "serious document" is of no importance. What is important is that France, despite the hatred of her politicians, is gaining a clear knowledge of English literature, and is expressing her opinion without rancour and without intemperance.

THE TRUTH ABOUT THE LIBERAL PARTY.

FOR some time past the present condition and future prospects of what is called the Liberal party have been engaging the valuable time and the diligent attention of those whose pleasing task it is to comment at stated intervals upon public affairs. Every shade of opinion, with hardly an exception, has found more or less articulate expression; and as those who write *to*, as well as those who write *for*, the papers (and truly there is much virtue in a preposition) have taken a hand in the discussion, it is to be supposed that not much remains unsaid. The rival banquets and the rival banqueters—the heated oratory of Lord Rosebery—the gathering of conciliation and the new oath of allegiance at the Reform Club—in brief, all the varied scenes which made up the stupendous farce of last parliamentary session, have been industriously reviewed, and have supplied their crop of inferences, flattering or the reverse, according to the idiosyncrasy of the commentator, as to the state of discipline and efficiency of the regiment of which Sir Henry Campbell - Bannerman is the proud leader in the House of Commons. To the Tory, pure and simple, like ourselves, these things have been, in the vivid language of the London populace, a “fair treat,” and we here beg leave to pretermitt the customary exordium as to the desirability of there being “a

strong Opposition,” or “a militant Opposition,” whichever the accepted phrase may be. We have not the slightest desire to see any party that Sir Henry Campbell - Bannerman may chance to lead add a single inch to its stature, or one ounce of power to its elbow. Ample, however, as is the liberty which our periodical press is used to exercise in expatiating over the troubles of a political combination, it sometimes happens that the more brusque and picturesque interchange of thought of which private conversation is the medium, succeeds in bringing to light certain truths which leading articles in the daily papers and solemn pronouncements in the monthly reviews make no pretence of discovering. How often must the well-worn bag have disgorged its feline occupant (as poor Mr Sala might have said) in the privacy of Liberal smoking-rooms during the last six or nine months! With what manly candour must the affectionation of Liberal unity in *essentialibus* have been pooh-poohed over the last cigar and positively the last split soda before turning in! The contending factions, we understand, see little enough of one another in private life—do not, at any rate, “sit in one another’s pockets,” as the phrase goes; but we are quite prepared to believe that they have shown a surprising unanimity in expressing their minds about those of their own household

with whom they do not see eye to eye. No harm, then, we think, can possibly be done, and assuredly no bones can be broken, by an attempt to set forth, with something of the frankness of everyday intercourse, one or two of the aspects in which the existing predicament of the Liberal party presents itself to those to whom its depressed state affords the most exquisite entertainment, and who profess to nourish no overwhelming desire for its rehabilitation in the good graces of the electorate.

The Liberal party, like Gaul, is divided, as is well known, into three portions. There are the pro-Boers (and no more compendious or better-bestowed nickname has taken root in the political nomenclature of recent years); there are the Liberal [Imperialists], whose highly appropriate brackets we shall, *brevitatis causâ*, henceforth dispense with; and there are those who occupy, or suppose themselves to occupy, an intermediate position between the two extreme wings, ready to gravitate towards either, according as the drift of public opinion seems to tend. But, for all practical purposes, this middle party may be classed with the pro-Boers. The moment pressure has been applied to them from that quarter they have yielded, dutifully following the example of their eminent chief. It is high time for the fence on which Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman for a while sat to be relegated to the limbo of decayed

and effete metaphors; and we do not imagine that the most perfect eloquence that ever adorned the most sweet, persuasive tongue, would ever make him comprehend how despicable a figure he cut while perched upon the insecure eminence of that too familiar top-rail. Finish the South African war by completing the thorough conquest of the enemy, and simultaneously offer him "such terms as a self-respecting and high-spirited people," &c., &c. (the imbecile formula is, we hope, sufficiently discredited), was the ludicrous policy which this cosmopolitan sage propounded, if it can be said that he ventured to adumbrate any policy at all. But we must do even Sir Henry justice. At the expense of a few remaining rags of patriotism and self-respect, he has made shift to mend his logic; and by many utterances—not least by that in which he, an ex-Minister of the Crown, dared to echo the impudent and disgusting cant about the "barbarity" of our military measures—he has fully established his title to being an out-and-out pro-Boer, in so far, that is to say, as he is capable of being an out-and-out anything. Accordingly, in meditating upon the relations of the various groups of the Liberal party to one another, we may safely leave out of account that portion which, though numerically the most considerable, is devoid of initiative and enthusiasm, and is usually content to merge its

individuality in that of those noisier and more pushing politicians whose chief inspiration is an unaffected and inextinguishable grudge against their country.

The fact that the hostile parties in the Liberal camp are only two in number, and that the issue upon which they are at variance seems to be correspondingly simplified, makes it the more mysterious that any one should think it worth his while to make believe that they differ purely upon matters of detail, and that in "principle" they are wholly at one. Even Sir Edward Grey, we observe, is not ashamed to give currency to this fallacy—so uncomplimentary, when properly understood, to the factions concerned. "The difference between Liberals," he says, "in this matter [the war in South Africa, to wit] is one not of principle but of the interpretation of facts."¹ The consolation which he appears to derive from this reflection is perhaps scarcely consistent with a due appreciation of the supreme importance of facts in the affairs of life. But, whatever the validity of the distinction which Sir Edward thus seeks to draw, it must needs occur to a cool observer from the outside that to call the difference between the pro-Boers and the Imperialists a difference of principle is grievously to understate the case—upon the assumption, *bien entendu*, that the Imperialists mean what they say. It is a difference, not of principle merely, but of point of view, of

mental and moral attitude, of habit of thought—above all, and including all these, of temperament; and temperament is what really matters in the conduct of business and of life. The particular manifestation of this antagonism of temperament with which we are here concerned is that which the course of events in South Africa has evoked. But it is idle to suppose that the antipathy will not reveal itself on a hundred other occasions. The Imperialist approaches foreign affairs with a marked prepossession in favour of his native land and of the British Empire. He is prone to assume that, when the King's dominions are invaded by a foreign foe, we are, *prima facie*, justified, not merely in repelling the invasion, but also in inflicting the most signal vengeance in our power upon the authors of so insolent an act of aggression. The right which he most willingly concedes to every other country he is audacious enough to claim for his own. The pro-Boer, on the other hand, has a powerful and irresistible bias in the very opposite direction. He may affect to be fair-minded, and open to conviction that England is not always and everywhere hopelessly in the wrong; but show him the man who will convince him! When it is added that with this hateful prejudice he combines the muddle-headed notion that the code of morality prescribed for individuals is equally binding upon nations in their commerce with one another (or, rather, binding upon Great Britain

¹ 'National Review,' No. 223, September 1901, p. 34.

alone among the communities of the world), it is easy to see that by no possible diplomacy, however astute, can a permanent accommodation be effected between bigots of this description and men who detest the grounds, as heartily as they dread the consequences, of such Bedlamite theories of action.

If we have diagnosed with any approach to accuracy the pitiable malady under which the pro-Boers labour, it seems to follow as an inevitable consequence that if the Imperialists are in earnest, and if they desire their views to have any share in moulding the policy of the country, they must relinquish all political association, nominal as well as real, with their antagonists. The necessity for so bold and peremptory a step is strongly emphasised by the recollection that, after all, it is the pro-Boers who represent the "main stream" of Liberal tradition. No doubt this is most unpleasant hearing for the Imperialists, who cling to the epithet Liberal with so fond and unreasoning a tenacity; but, palatable or unpalatable, it happens to be a fact. The traditional foreign policy of the Liberals is one, we do not say of exaggerated caution, but of sheer pusillanimity, dressed up in fine language, about the expensiveness and sinfulness of war, and the urgent need of some trumpery domestic reform. A striking analogy to the attitude of the bulk of his Majesty's present Opposition is afforded by that of the Whigs during the great French war at the beginning of the nineteenth

century. "Who ever thought," asks Scott of Southey in 1807, *à propos* of the politics of the 'Edinburgh Review,' "who ever thought he did a service to a person engaged in an arduous conflict by proving to him, or attempting to prove to him, that he must necessarily be beaten? *And what effect can such language have but to accelerate the accomplishment of the prophecy which it contains?*"

We may grant that Jeffrey and his men did not season their gloomy prognostications with that rapturous humanitarian unctious which, alternating with violent and sometimes blasphemous execrations, forms the chief flavouring of our latter-day anti-British rhetoric. But they and their modern representatives have a common characteristic in the systematic and habitual use of language and arguments the chief effect of which (whether designed or undesigned) must be the encouragement of the enemy in his desperate projects of resistance to our arms.

It may be said that the Palmerstonian era supplies a sufficient answer to our contention as to the Liberal tradition; and we cheerfully own that the years during which Lord Palmerston was at the helm of affairs mark a refreshing interlude—a delightful variation—in the Liberal attitude towards foreign policy. But we may point out, in the first place, that it was under the Palmerston *régime* that the practice of colony-snubbing became so deeply engrained in our administrative system that even yet it has scarcely been

got rid of; and, in the second place, that with the termination of that *régime* the Liberal party reverted to its normal frame of mind. The great principles at the bottom of pro-Boerism were seen in full blast during the continuance of the Eastern crisis in the late seventies; and no one who desires an authoritative exposition of them need go further than Mr Gladstone's Mid-Lothian speeches of 1879-80. It is not so much the actual opinions there enunciated that are instructive and significant, as the tone and sentiment which animate these ponderous and verbose harangues — the unquenchable fire of hostility to Greater Britain, the eagerness to throttle all our national and imperial aspirations, the disposition to believe that any nation with which we happen to be at loggerheads *must* be in the right of it. No passages in the Mid-Lothian speeches were more pregnant of mischief than those which deal with the then recent annexation of the Transvaal. It was on a Mid-Lothian platform that the seeds were sown of the course of dealing which blossomed after Majuba Hill, and attained its full fruition two years ago. For our own part, we think there can be no question, *pace* Sir Edward Grey, that Mr Gladstone, had he been spared, would have been a pro-Boer; and we are the less disposed to share Sir Edward's cautiously expressed doubts on the point that they seem based on nothing more solid than the vague probability that Mr Gladstone would have been extremely

angry, and would have given a loose to his remarkable "power of indignation," had he thought that Mr Kruger had played fast and loose with him in the negotiations.

If, then, we repeat, the Liberal Imperialists are to achieve anything worth achieving, it is absolutely imperative for them to come out from among those who blindly cherish an exploded and debilitating tradition. If they are so enamoured of the name of Liberal that they must needs endeavour to act with the pro-Boers, that tradition will be too strong for them in the long-run; for the pro-Boers, we may depend upon it, will not readily permit themselves to be snuffed out. Lord Rosebery has been shrewd enough to grasp this truth: not so, apparently, Mr Asquith, Mr Haldane, Sir Henry Fowler, and their followers. The result of the failure to realise it is seen in the candidature of Mr Cecil Harmsworth in North East Lanarkshire — not, we should imagine, an exhibition upon which that gentleman can look back with much gratification. Had the Liberal Unionists in 1886 pursued the course which recommends itself to the Imperialists of to-day, what would have become of the United Kingdom? The first substantial pledge that the braver and, in the long-run, more prudent line of conduct is to be followed, will be the frank and formal abandonment of Home Rule. When that pledge has been solemnly given, it will be plenty of time for the supporters of the present Ministry to think of putting

their trust in the Liberal Imperialists. As matters stand, nothing would surprise us less than to find them a year or two hence joining forces with the pro-Boers in an assault upon "the worst Government of modern times," and co-operating in one of those fierce attacks upon some form or other of private property, which have ere now offered a convenient rallying cry and a fair prospect of success to the Liberal cause.

But there is yet another element of discord among the Liberals which, though somewhat elusive and impatient of definition or analysis, is perhaps the most potent of all. A couple of sentences in conversation would express it plainly and trenchantly enough. The late Mr Bagehot would have done it ample justice, and traced its influence through every channel with his unparalleled combination of subtlety and common-sense. We, alas! must fall back upon periphrasis and paraphrase, happy if we could but think that a sufficient portion of his mantle had fallen upon us to enable our meaning to be made tolerably clear.

It has, then, long appeared to us that upon the whole the most striking feature of the modern Liberal party is the fact that it is dominated not by its best men, in any sense of that superlative, but by the men whose instincts are thoroughly unsound, whose outlook upon life is neither sane nor manly, and who, in a word, could by no stretch of politeness be described as "good fellows." The expression is colloquial, and not by any means

completely satisfactory or adequate, but, for want of a better, let it suffice. We are far, observe, from asserting that the Unionist ranks are filled exclusively by Galahads and Bayards, and the Liberal ranks by their opposites, though it is notorious that if you meet a stranger who is a good fellow it is long odds on his being a Unionist, while if you are unlucky enough to fall in with a pro-Boer the odds are equally heavy that in some respect or other he is "sadly to seek." But we do most emphatically assert that in the Unionist party those individuals in whom folly, bad temper, and the various ingredients which make up the negation of being a "good fellow" predominate, are kept in their proper places, whereas in the Liberal party they elbow themselves to the front, and often call the tune to which the rank and file are expected to dance. No one who knows anything of the internal economy of the Liberal party, and of the class of men who act as its wire-pullers and organisers, will venture to dispute this proposition. Let it not be supposed that what we have just said is a mere repetition in different language of Mr Gladstone's famous flourishes about the "classes" and the "masses." Many of the most offensive and unscrupulous members of the party which Mr Gladstone led to dishonour and ruin belong to that portion of it which is distinguished by the possession of great wealth and even titles. In truth, a far larger number of rich and well-to-do men belong to the Gladstonian party

than is commonly supposed; and a happy thing it is for the Unionist cause that this should so be. Many of them are arrogant, overbearing, ostentatious, and, consequently, unpopular, to a degree which renders them extremely useful to the other side from an electioneering point of view. Our contention is applicable to all strata of society; and what has long been true of the territorial, the agricultural, the professional, and the commercial class, is now equally true of the trader, the mechanic, the artisan, and the labourer.

Our point is, not that there are not plenty of good fellows who choose to call themselves Liberals, but that it is not they who "run" the Liberal party. In the nature of things this may be unavoidable, and to a certain extent it has always been the case. What are the mainsprings of any movement in favour of internal "reform"? We may dismiss at once the aspiration for abstract perfection. No man, unless he be an Oxford don,¹ was ever ass enough seriously to advocate change from any such motive. The perfectly legitimate and natural desire to "better one's self" and to achieve easier conditions of livelihood has, of course, always been among the most powerful of the stimulants

to reform. But we question if it has ever been possible to "get up steam" unless there exists the desire, not only to remedy some grievance real or imaginary, but also to "pay off old scores," to "pay" some one else—often some definite individual—"out," to "get up-sides with him"; in short, to level down as well as to level up. No better instance of this can be supplied than the Dis-establishment agitation. There the whole "steam" has been provided by the dissenting teachers, who are eager to "score off" the parson because he is of more consequence than they are, and by the people who happen to have a "down" (in Antipodean phrase) on the parson of their particular parish. The general public, on the other hand, remains unable to see that the existence of the parson *in statu quo* is one whit more of a grievance than the existence of the school-master. Political philosophers have mostly ignored, but great demagogues have always recognised, this salient *trait* in human nature, and, like Mr Gladstone, have taken good care to appeal not merely to the cupidity of the elector but to his little social enmities and private jealousies as well. It is precisely its inability to

¹ Among the miscellaneous elements of which the militant pro-Boer faction is composed, there is no class whose instincts are so fundamentally unwholesome, whose view of life is so incorrigibly distorted, and whose self-righteousness is so colossal, as your Oxford radical. It was one of the late Mr Jowett's best points that he was emphatically "*patriæ amantissimus*," to use the phrase he himself addressed to Mr Bright after the latter had refused to be a party to the great betrayal of 1886. What would he have said if he could have anticipated that his successor at Balliol would openly avow his attachment to one of the most malignant forms of pro-Boerism by countenancing the credulous and silly females who permitted themselves to be stuffed with fairy tales "pitched" to them by the astute Boer *vrauns*!

arouse those noble and elevating passions which has confessedly brought about the collapse of the Social Democratic Federation. The persons in whose bosoms the flame of such enmities and jealousies burns with a steady glow are rarely agreeable members of society. They are far from pleasant to meet or to converse with, being, indeed, bad-blooded, destitute of humour, and apt to become extremely tedious. But, being strong generators of an indispensable sort of political motive power, they have always taken an important share in the councils of the great Liberal party.

That their share is greater than it used to be is, we think, indisputable, and it may help us to measure the decadence of that party if we reflect that, while once it had a Melbourne and a Palmerston for its leaders, it now counts among its front bench men—well, let us say, people like Mr James Bryce, the *beau-idéal* of the week-end professor. Neither Lord Melbourne nor Lord Palmerston, to be sure, was a heaven-born statesman; but each was a *man*, not a *don*; each had an intimate knowledge of affairs and of the world; each had an instinctive apprehension of human nature. Their policy was not weazen and anæmic, their utterances were not acrid and peevish. When one recalls the remarkable persons whom Mr Gladstone rewarded with baronetcies and peerages, it is difficult to conceive that he did much to bring forward the “good fellows” in his own galley. But the critical im-

pulse on the path of deterioration was, of course, communicated by his adoption of Home Rule in 1886. We are aware that it is considered highly impolite as well as impolitic to speak in disparagement of the Irish Nationalist party; nay, that the doing so may be attended by inconvenient and ridiculous consequences. We therefore make haste to avow our belief that they are all descended from a hundred kings apiece, more or less; that they are types of manly, or at least anthropoid, beauty; that their integrity is spotless as their manners are refined and their behaviour irreproachable; and that not even “the Pope’s brass band” surpassed them in the graces and virtues which a century has taught us to look for in repealers of the Union. Nevertheless, the singular fact remains that the Liberals have learned no good from their alliance with the Nationalists, as they themselves are very well aware, and that they have never recovered what they lost fifteen years ago when so many of their most approved and respected comrades preferred the interests of the country to the interests that clustered round a party name. There has been a steady declension in Liberal manners during that period, which not even the tardy repudiation of Home Rule can immediately counteract. But it has always been a pet delusion of the Liberals that they can touch pitch without being defiled, and that they can condone “political” crime and every species of disorder without incurring the obloquy

which attaches in every civilised community to outrage, murder, and regicide.

The bearing of what we have just been saying upon the Liberal dissensions is obvious enough; for, if we read the situation aright, the endeavours of the Liberal Imperialists to assert themselves are in no small measure the outcome of a tacit though sturdy revolt against the dominion of the people who are the reverse of "good fellows." That the pro-Boers realise this is plain from the abuse with which their kept press bespatters any Liberal who, by innocently accepting an invitation to some private dinner-party, unwarily betrays his preference for the society of ladies and gentlemen over that of the male and female yahoos whom the culpable good nature of our constitution permits to parade the country spluttering forth their venom against the king's soldiers, soliciting the benediction of heaven upon the king's enemies, and praying, oh! so fervently, for the advent of bad times. Again, we do not say that all Liberal Imperialists are great and good men. We have already indicated that they require constant "keeping up to the mark," and that they have not as yet shown that alacrity in taking the decisive and irrevocable step which would stamp them unmistakably as at once high-minded and sagacious. Moreover, we are not unaware that among their leading spirits are two or three "thrusters" who are

primarily concerned for their own honour and glory and not for that of the empire. At the same time, it is indisputable that by far the larger share of what good material was left in the Liberal party by the Home Rule split is strongly tinctured with Imperialist views. Whether that nucleus is to become an effective and beneficent force in British politics, time alone can show. At one period it looked as if Lord Rosebery had seriously addressed himself to the duty of making it so; but he, it should seem, prefers to plough a solitary furrow, and to spend his time in opening flower-shows, which, it must be owned, he does *à merveille*. We reiterate, however, that it will not become such an effective and beneficent force so long as the slightest taint of the pro-Boer virus lingers about it.

It is tempting to pass on to cast the horoscope of the Unionist party, and to consider the perils which are likely to beset it in the immediate future. But the limits of our space are already exhausted; and we must conclude with the reminder that in proportion to the weakness of the Opposition does it behove a Government to be strong. Only the utmost tenacity of purpose, the stiffest lip, and the stoutest heart can repair in the future the mischief that has been already wrought by the uncertain aim and the nerveless grasp which have characterised too many departments of the present Administration.

BLACKWOOD'S EDINBURGH MAGAZINE.

No. MXXXIII.

NOVEMBER 1901.

Vol. CLXX.

NIGHT.

BY "LINESMAN."

NIGHT on the veldt, and all the winds at rest save one, which every now and then sends a faint warm puff across the miles of withered grass, like the uneasy snatches of mutterings coming from a man talking in his sleep. All around dead, utter silence—the silence peculiar to vast spaces—and deep blue velvet darkness resting upon the grassy immensity like a hot, heavy hand; a silence that makes the ears throb with a desire to hear it broken, which is not broken but deepened by the fluttering patter of a meercat stealing to its burrow, or a beetle settling with a little click upon a sun-baked antheap; a darkness that is impenetrable even on the dim yellow shadow of the upland

veldt-road, and almost appalling in the kloofs and hollows. Many fine things have been written about Night, but nothing that even in the remotest degree can tell the reader of the awe and solemnity of the dark hours that precede moonrise on the South African veldt. What the sea is to water, so is the veldt to earth—its acme of nobility and grandeur, tremendous in its very featurelessness, because, like the sea, there is nothing by which one may measure it but itself and oneself.

But war, the spoiler of all serene things, has something afoot to destroy the colossal calm of this particular night. From far, far back in the darkness comes a faint, very faint,

thudding sound, as monotonous and regular as the beat of the tom-tom from a distant Indian village—the sort of sound whose beginning is imperceptible, its throbbing blending so perfectly with the silence that it seems to have been going on for ever, and when it ceases is still apparently audible until some more real noise breaks the spell. A practised veldt-scout, lying ear to ground, would diagnose this faint, earthy drumming in a moment—horses' hoofs! Horses moving at a walk and in close order, and coming this way.¹ The drumming grows louder and more distinct, passing from a dream-sound into the definite beat-beat of iron upon turf. Then it dies slowly away, the advancing horses are descending a dip; it rises again, grows plainer, then plain, and intermingled with it the chink of bits and buckles, finally ceasing altogether apparently just on the far side of a rise in the ground higher than ordinary, which stretches across the sky like an indigo wall in the darkness. Whoever it is riding so late is riding very warily, topping no rises until certain what is on the other side. Two mounted figures, so black that they are plainly seen against the black sky, appear suddenly and noiselessly on the ridge-line, and stand for some moments as motionless as statues of ebony. Then they disappear: they are descending this side of the rise.

The thudding and the steely chinks recommence behind it, and in a moment more the peace of the night is broken for ever, as, with a stir and subdued clatter, creaking of leather and blowing of horses' nostrils, a strong party of mounted men press over the rise, and, like the two phantoms in front of them, become again invisible in its shadow. A party of British cavalry! No more mystery about the veldt for this night; even its solemn darkness changes like magic into a "tactical aid," and the majestic vagueness of its contours into the most practical of considerations for these eighty purposeful horsemen feeling their way over them. Man has a certain dominion over nature. Even in peacetime he can vulgarise the Alps and the Ocean, and in war the same immensities must dwindle to the terms of his twopenny scufflings, so that men looking down into a mountain gorge see nothing in its awful profundity but "cover," or, turning their eyes to its lofty shelves, complacently damn them as "good artillery positions!" Yet in war, the dulllest resource of dullard man, there is the dignity natural to all natural things, its events are far grander than the men who make them, so that the mountain gorges and terraces gain as much as they lose by this dominion of man's over them, and remain terrible.

Certainly the veldt on this

¹ Describes a very dashing exploit performed by Menne's Scouts in the Versamelberg on the night of July 29, 1901.

night, if it loses its tremendous quiet and mystery in the presence of the stealthy squadron of Britons, is as suddenly invested with an interest as tense as its former silence. For these men are on the most perilous errand that ever falls to the lot of the King's messengers, and are praying that the darkness may lap them round yet thicker, so that they may accomplish it with greater secrecy and certainty. A night attack! Let him who has ever taken part in one recall the sickening, wearing anxiety of it. Did he not feel as if the force he rode with was clothed in luminous paint and hung with bells, because of his very agony of hope it was invisible and soundless? Was he not morally certain that he was leading them in a futile circle because his whole honour and hopes for life depended upon his leading them straight? Were they not discovered every moment by hostile bushes—nay, shadows—because discovery meant ruin? Few men can lead or accompany many night attacks and keep their nerve, but of those few the army in South Africa has luckily numbered many men whom an era of dangerous night-work, coming after two years of incessant strain, still sees unshaken and confident, and with confident men behind them. And the leader of this little band being such a man, they steal through the night over the anxious miles with no qualms, on their part at any rate, straight for the invisible berg ahead. Behind it lies their prey, 120 Boers shelter-

ing, and, let us hope, sleeping under the lee of the great, grassy wall. A "pesky," irreconcilable lot of ruffians, led by a certain violent Erasmus, who have been swooping so often at the line defences from their eyrie that their destruction has become a necessity; and as one may as well attempt to arrest soot-flakes as Boers in the daytime, the blow must fall suddenly at night, and in the very eyrie itself. A hazardous off-chance, indeed, even with equal numbers, with many hundred chances against it, and ruin too hideous to contemplate if unsuccessful; but with numbers actually less than those of the objective, a night onslaught on a wary semi-animal enemy is an enterprise bordering on the desperate. Yet such has been the unique and dangerous nature of the fighting in South Africa, that what in other wars has been considered a job too risky to be often attempted is here looked upon as all in the day's work; and this is by no means the first time that these eighty troopers have found themselves upon the open waste at night, with the camp far behind them and the tremendous unknown close in front. On they go, over the flats, down into the dark hollows, up the darker rises beyond, every man locked close to his neighbour, staring from side to side, and knocking his neighbour's knee when he starts, as he does momentarily, at a fancied sound outside the squadron, or a fancied sight away out in the blackness. Not a word must be spoken, even when Bill on the left of you clutches your

bridle-arm, and points with his up to the left, where the rise we are breasting ends in a dim knob. Upon its very summit stand three black figures of horses, too dark to see more, motionless as the kopje they stand on. They disappear, and from the knob comes the faint ring of a hoof upon a stone. Are we discovered? The officer in front holds up his hand, the leading files halt, those in rear bump into them, and the whole party stands huddled together half-way up the slope, every man's head bent sideways in a fever of listening. If those were Boers the game is up: they are galloping back to the laager now, and very few of those eighty blankets and picket-pegs in camp will see their proper occupants again. The commanding officer is whispering to the guide, a little active figure in a slouch hat, and one of his subalterns, who dismount and vanish on foot towards the knob. They are going to solve this riddle somehow. Quietly they creep upwards ten yards apart, and worm their way to the summit, and from there, to their intense relief, perceive the three black shapes some distance down the farther slope. Not Boers, evidently; probably not even Kaffirs. The subaltern and guide, taking no chances, stalk them carefully downhill through the long grass, revolvers at the "ready," and finally lie staring and frowning a few yards above the suspicious objects. A strained pause, then a low chuckle from the guide, which would lift a ton of anxiety from the band of listeners be-

hind if they could hear it,— loose horses! The two rise and walk swiftly back over the knob down to their friends; still no word, that is only one of a thousand chances made good, and the march is resumed.

A mile or two more of these risky rises and hollows brings them to the first certain danger of the enterprise, the mouth of a long narrow pass which runs around the western flank of the berg, emerging like a great drain from its opposite side, close to the farms about which the laager is collected. A Boer laager is not, as I have said before, the prim rectangular township which shelters a British force. As often as not it contains no tents at all, merely a few tarpaulins for the *brandwacht* or picket, and a handy clump of farm buildings and outhouses for the sleeping main body, with the stone kraals as stables for the horses and cattle. The farm to be negotiated to-night is of exceptional size, the property of one of the Joubert family, and scattered around it lie several smaller holdings, the abodes of the great man's *beiwohners*, or tenants. It is these outlying buildings that constitute the chief danger to an attacking force, forming as they do a ready-made encircling line of outposts, difficult enough to surprise singly, and exceedingly difficult to surround and isolate collectively, as must be done if the main laager is to be kept in ignorance of the presence of danger. And the first of these lies four miles this side of it, at the narrow gate of the pass itself, shut in by steep, stony

peaks and walls. A Boer picket is known to lie in wait there, and must be rushed because it cannot be avoided. The little force draws near, so near that the sentinel kopjes look like huge black fingers splayed out over it, and the men, as they commence to breast the long rise leading up to the rift, obey instructions previously given by noiselessly extending into three separate lines, those on the flanks trending up towards the peaks on either side of the nek, the centre one heading stoutly for the nek itself, through which they can see the sky as a deep blue V cut out of the black mass of the berg. At that moment a mounted Kaffir appears like a phantom amongst them, to be gripped desperately by a couple of troopers. But he is a friend, and is doing a friend's work. From his kraal by a distant spruit his animal instinct has told him there was something up to-night. Perhaps a herd of springbok flitted past his door in the darkness, with the faint rustle of tissue-paper blown along by the breeze, or a trio of coolan¹ flapped over his roof. Springbok and coolan do not choose dark nights for exercise without good reason, and no native would sleep in peace without knowing from what the wild creatures fled. So the shabby horse and execrable saddle were pulled out, and Umpungan set out to work his way towards the disturbance, whatever it was, crawling, sidling, listening, noting more

vanishing springbok, placing his face to the ground upon every hard flat, until at last the drumming and the clink of steel bits has reached his wonderful ears, and finally the body of horsemen has been picked out from the gloom by his wonderful eyes. The British soldiers, who pay for what they take, and do not abuse his women, or use the sjambok without an extraordinary amount of palaver and, *mirabile dictu*, good reason, are blundering across his domain in their stupid, noisy, white-man fashion. He laughs at their cohesion, at the iron on their horses' hoofs and the steel in their mouths—as well might his fathers have blown upon the conch when ambushing the sleeping lion in the good old days; he laughs at the mercy in their hearts for a vanquished enemy—'twas not thus that his nation avenged the Sabine rape of their women by Bunu's braves; but they are his friends, and guessing what sport they are at, he rides on invisible and soundless on their flank, marveling at their slowness and their daring. For he knows the risk, none better; have not his people had many a terrible lesson from those crafty, keen-eyed white black-men the Dutch from the south country!

And riding thus he does them the best of good turns. The Boer picket on the nek has been uneasy too, and instead of sitting quiet and silent as usual in the little round kraal which forms their shelter, have been moving in-

¹ Great blue cranes.

quiringly over the neighbouring ground, and are at this precise moment poking round the right foot of the biggest of the right-hand kopjes, well away from and out of sight and sound of the nek and the slopes approaching it. Here they are spotted by the self-constituted British flank-guard, who, risking sudden death by many bayonets, swerves sharply inwards towards the startled squadron, and, as related, is at once roughly collared. Explanations *sotto voce* to the guide, with much gesticulation, but in the softest of hunter's whispers. "No *brandwacht* on the nek, *baas*, *brandwacht* he down there! Be queek, he kom back soon!" They push on quickly, with more care now for speed than silence, with the native well in the centre in case he has lied, when——! But he has not lied, and they shuffle successfully over the dreaded spot, pass the little kraal with the embers of a small fire still glowing behind it, and are a mile down the gorge before the Dutch picket, having seen and heard nothing on its excursion, climbs thankfully up to its rest again, knowing nothing of proverbs about horses and stable-doors!

And then the moon rose, not with the leisurely gravity of her British habits, but sending a lance of steel light with magnificent suddenness across the world of grass from some particularly black corner of the horizon away to the north-east. Like some enormous opalescent balloon she swings above the banks of night clouds, until

having moved above everything definite in the sky by which one could perceive her movement, she rides apparently stationary like a white, shining hole in the vast level of blue velvet above. What a change upon the earth beneath! The flats are resplendent, the hollows alternate with silver tracts of light, and sharp triangular shadows as the contours of the knobs and kopjes are flung into them. The veldt road is a broad river of glory, the goat-tracks like electric flashes interlacing and crisscrossing the broad surface of the veldt, and all little humble things like tufts of grass and solitary stones stand out with so much beauty that one makes a mental note to look if some of it is not still upon them in the daytime. And the gorge along which our squadron is pressing becomes a splendid, illuminated peril. If there are any Boers upon the walls on either side, they *must* see the horsemen who move along pursued by a thousand scintillations from rifle-barrels, stirrups, even the little brass badges on shoulder-straps and hats. But luck is attending pluck to-night; they pass between the great silvery ramparts unchallenged, though many of them are so certain of hearing the harsh "Wies da!" which will call ruin to them, that the still air seems to be full of the sound. But they pass on, thread their way amongst the dongas which mark the farther exit of the pass,—a broad vague opening with none of the dangers of its brother gate, now four miles back in charge of its deluded

warders, and in a few moments are again in the open with the berg behind them, in the very midst of the enemy's secret preserves.

And the first covert to be drawn is very close ahead, three little farms half a mile apart, and perhaps two from the main laager. The squadron splits up again into three parties, the two outermost vanish outwards, the centre one forwards, each towards its farm. They dismount, and leaving their horses behind walls, advance on foot and surround each building in single file. From the houses no sound or sight, such luck was never seen, they are empty! Forward, still on foot, towards Joubert's great building. Another small farm shows up in the moonlight half a mile on. Blood must be drawn here or nowhere; there is a light in the window. With infinite caution it is surrounded, men walking on tiptoe, with care that even one spur does not clink against the other, every man with his rifle-barrel pointed towards that dimly lighted window, and bending low so that his body may not be seen above its sill. At last all are in their places, a ring of excited, crouching men, with the tiny farmhouse silent and sleeping in their midst. An officer crawls forward, revolver in hand, and then stands erect close up to the door; another worms his way to the window, and lies flat beneath it, staring upwards, his head stiffly thrown back. A few men, previously told off, follow, each

with bayonets fixed. There is a moment of intense silence; then as startlingly as the report of a cannon comes a low call from the officer flattened against the door, "Maak oop!" ("Open!") There is a scuffle inside the house and a sharp ejaculation. The officer at the door steps back a pace and points his revolver, he at the window half raises himself from the ground and, stretching one hand over the sill, levels his weapon at the dirty glass. The men behind them bring their bayonets to the charge, and stand glaring over the points of them. The door is flung open from the inside. "God in heaven! what's up?" "Hands up!" The dumfounded old man at the door raises his rifle, and the officer thrusts his revolver in his face until its muzzle is buried in his grizzled beard. "No, my father," says a younger voice behind him; "don't make any trouble!" The old man yields, and he and his son come forth with rolling eyes and shaking limbs; no shame to shake at such an awakening! At the window the officer is standing covering two shrinking Burghers inside; they have their rifles in their hands, but resting upon the floor, and are crouching over them staring fixedly, as if fascinated, up at the stern face and four inches of blue steel looking at them through the pane. One of them shifts his hand along his rifle. "None of that!" growls the Briton, looking along his sights. And they too yield, in a maze of terror and bewilderment at the sud-

denness of it all, and with the others are placed under guard. So much for the picket. The cordon around the farm stirs and shifts, longing to break silence, and to get done with this ageing work. A few whispered orders and they are off once more, in five parties this time, for the big job of the night, the attack on the commando in the farm.

The latter, a big rambling building built in two sides of a square, is perched like a hanging garden on the very shoulder of the berg, with plantations fringing its lower side, and around its upper side a tangle of long grass, old mealies, and the rank vegetation of two years of neglect. In the summit of the berg, hanging immediately over it, is a deep and narrow nek, called, from the owner of the farm, Joubert's Pass, the approaches to which from the far side are of such extreme difficulty that a force intending to attack the farm would stand no chance of doing so undetected by the Boer picket lying in the centre of the chasm. And from the farm, if attacked from the other side, as is the case to-night, this nek forms a secure line of retreat, covered by the rifles of friends upon it. So that there can be no hope of success unless it is first in our hands, and one of the five parties bears away and upwards to the left to seize it, with this much hope, that the picket hearing a movement from the "home" side may, until too late, suppose it to be from friends coming up

from the farm, or even recognising the intruders as enemies, may flee in silence rather than make a fuss with the road to their laager blocked. Of the other four detachments, one turns down to the lower ground below the farm to intercept stragglers, and the other three advance on the farm itself in a half moon. It is now nearly three o'clock, and deathly still. The moon, which has shone so bravely for five hours, has moved into a drift of clouds which streak across her mother-of-pearl disc like a woolly grid-iron and shut out half her light. Already there is that strange feeling of coming day in the air, a little stir in the grass and the tops of the scattered trees, a time more melancholy than night, and making the thought that there can ever be another day almost an impossibility. The business in hand must be done quickly, for there is little hope of success, even of return, if Erasmus's desperadoes once detect the small numbers of their assailants. In a night affair the attackers can expect little mercy if they are worsted. The confusion, terror, and indignation of the surprised gives little scope or will to take prisoners those of the beaten surprisers whom it is impossible to shoot. The dismounted troopers, stealing forward in the half light, know all this well enough, and pray that events may march quickly so that they may forget it and quit themselves like men.

They have not long to wait. Down from the path above

comes the clattering of a galloping, stumbling horse. A Boer half-way up the hillside has detected the party climbing to cut off the picket, and with presence of mind he leaves the smaller issue to its fate and flies to warn the main body. The clattering changes to a heavy swishing as he plunges through the thicket behind the house. The three encircling parties run crouching to their places, only just in time. Then a hoarse shout from the Boer, who pulls up at the end of the wing and flings himself from his horse, "Come out, Burghers! come out! The English are on the pass!" He then runs behind the farm, calling wildly to a native to loose the precious cattle from their kraal, "Jantje, Jantje, you sleeping pig, loose the beasts!" The bewildered animals stream out, trotting lumberingly right amongst the men lying in ambush, and between them and the farm. Then some one fires. A roar arises within the building, an exclamation from a hundred startled men, the sound of a hundred men clutching at their rifles and clothes and leaping across the encumbered rooms. The first man appears at the doorway in the end of the wing, another shot and he is down. And then the tempest is let loose, and the scene becomes indescribable. Out of the doorway pours a stream of half-naked men, some firing, some falling, all yelling in their terror, some curses, some for mercy. A ring of spitting, flashing fire bursts from the ambushade; it rolls from end to

end of the half circle, backwards and forwards, forward and back, its uproar redoubled by the tremendous smacking of the bullets upon the stone walls, the resonant singing note as they smite and tear through the corrugated tin roof, and the crash and streamy tinkle of shivering glass. From every window figures are leaping, some black, fully clothed, others ludicrously white in drawers and shirts. Some of the English charge madly up to these windows. "Hands up! hands up! you ——!" Mercy is given where asked (have British soldiers *ever* forgotten in the wildest of scuffles that their enemies were men with souls?), death is dealt out where roared for by a Mauser shot echoing from inside the rooms. The farm is surrounded by leaping, cursing figures, friend flying from friend in the gloom, some flinging themselves to the ground, some jumping high in the air at every shot, as if they expected the bullet to pass under their feet. It is an Inferno, a Babel, anything you will of horrible confusion, racket, and agony. But the Boers are too many for their assailants. They break out behind the circle in twos and threes, in tens and twenties, some running at full speed with bodies bent until they almost touch the ground; others manfully rushing at the straggling line which hems them in; others slither through the thicket at the back, and the bullets rasp through the long dry grass over their heads. All have their rifles and bandoliers—a Boer will grip these

in his sleep at a sound outside—and a party of them stand at bay in the plantation below the house, and add their fire to the appalling clamour. They are answered by a storm from the lower detachment, and melt away, leaving some gasping and gripping the twigs and undergrowth, or clutching at the empty air, as dying men will, and many rolling hideously among the sodden leaves, with animal-like cries, as men grievously hurt roll and cry. In the intervals bursts of rifle-fire are heard up by the pass. The picket there has stood to arms in time, and the British detachment can get no farther. A bad job this, for the way home must lie over that narrow rift. But the pace down below is too hot to inquire. For twenty mad minutes more the *cohue* seethes and roars around the farm, more scattered now, and farther from the buildings themselves. In odd corners, under walls and bushes, even old waggons and heaps of mealies, men are finding men to grapple with and bayonet or clutch by the throat. "Hands up!" "Hands up!" sounds from all sorts of dark spots,—often from a soldier encountering another in the half light, when they part with an oath and a laugh which has something hysterical in it. And then it dies fitfully away,—a hoarse cry here and there, a plunge of something heavy in the brushwood, and silence.

The moon has gone out, and the first glint of day over the shoulder of the berg only

accentuates the gloom. There is a long pause, which is broken into by the sharp commands of officers calling their scattered men around them. A small party, led by the commander, enters the farm to see if any stragglers still lurk within it. What a scene! Piles of blankets, saddles, impedimenta of all sorts, broken windows, doors wrenched off in the wild rush for the open air, and over all the vile atmosphere caused by a hundred men sleeping in a space too small for thirty. In one room the stump of a candle is guttering on the table, and by its feeble light a bed in the corner looks puffy and large to the quick eye of a trooper. "Some one under that mattress, sir," says he to the officer. "Come out of that!" No reply. "Come out, or I will fetch you!" Still silence. "Nothing there," says the officer, and turns away. But the trooper stays behind still doubtful, calling loudly once more to the motionless heap upon the bed. Finally, convinced at last, he raises his rifle with a laugh, and drives his bayonet down through the swelling mattress. But something squirms and heaves beneath the blow, and a red stain breaks out upon the quilting as the bayonet is withdrawn with difficulty. The trooper and another tear off the coverings, and lo! a stalwart, bearded Boer, writhing with a death-wound through the heart, his strong face working horribly as he dies clutching at the bed-clothing. Let us get away, even war has no right

to this sort of scene! So the two troopers hurry off, looking straight to their front, sorry and afraid. Outside officers are getting their men about them from all quarters, flushed, panting men for the most part, though some are pale and drawn, and have lost their voices. Common soldiers are not all of common blood and muscle; there are some into whose souls the cruel strokes of war cut as deeply as ever they do into those of professional sentimentalists. These men, and I have seen many of them, do not stand roaring over a bloody trench after the assault, but move apart and stare in silence. Yet they have struck as true and hard as any, right up to the bayonet-catch, and will do so again, perhaps with greater sternness and certainty for their terrible calm. But they are not pleasant men to meet at such times, having the air of those who see things that one cannot see, and apparently not recognising those whom they ought to recognise. No psychologist should write his volume until he has once rushed with the front line of a charging battalion: he will see many things he wotted nothing of, and will attain the fame of all true scientists, of being thoroughly disbelieved when he writes the truth.

And so they all roll up around their natural magnets, their officers, those trim young men who breathe but little quicker because their duty has led them into such a frightful scene; careful young men, with an eye to the end, no matter how wild

and distracting the beginning and middle; wonderful young men, with something very much weightier on their square shoulders than the stars and crowns they are so absurdly proud of; for the quarrels and honour of the Empire, human lives and similarly ponderous responsibilities are crystallised in those little brass tokens. The detachments are collected in no time; one is told off to search for the wounded, one to round up the cattle, a third to drive the Boers' riding-horses from the stables, a fourth to steal up to the pass above to aid the men already there in clearing a way for retirement when the time comes.

By Bellona, the time has come now! The Boers, about eighty, who broke through the thin ring round them, have brought to on the eyebrow of a wooded kloof away up to the right, and suddenly begin a rapid fire upon the farm-buildings, plainly visible now in the growing light, and in the light of the huge fire which is destroying a hundred saddles and innumerable blankets and piles of clothing in the farmyard. So the chief danger of all must be met after all—the crossing of the berg in the face of the infuriated enemy. Well, the sooner the better. “Containing” the snipers with a flank party, the officer in command fairly rushes the great “bullfinch” ahead, the advanced parties divide and take the pass over both flanking kopjes; then come the captured horses and cattle, lumbering and trotting up the slope, driven by men cantering on

either side ; then the ten prisoners, a mournful *posse*, like tramps on horseback, all jogging with downcast heads and flapping, unbuttoned scraps of clothing, some very watchful troopers riding amongst and around them ; then the rear-guard. Up they go, best pace, the picket on the pass flies before them (what a night it must have been for them with that drama unfolding below them !), the Boers in the kloof lose sight of them and are too dejected to follow, and then with a whoop and a clatter through the short rift and down the steep on its far side, and a few moments later out into the glorious grassy open and safety, just as the great sun raises his red face out of the east and, knowing nothing of the night, beams good-morning and goodwill around. It will be some time before he can look over the roof of the lofty berg down into that blasted farm, or into the thickets and plantations where lie things

that all his cheery warmth will never warm again, or in through the window at that twisted horror on the bed in the corner. By that time the British squadron will be riding into camp, weary, dirty, and unshaven, but happy in having done with all their might the perilous thing they had to do, and shouting for tea, having no use for the hydromel of admiration that is offered them from the comrades who have lain awake thinking of them and hoping for them all night. Something accomplished, something done towards the ending of this weary war, a little thing perhaps, reducing the enemy by no more than forty, and hearing the men who did it call it "nothing," I fear that of it I have perhaps made too much. But glory is not proportional—one single man can win whole worlds of it ; and if these splendid doers of nothing ever set out to attempt what they will call "something," may I be there to see !

ON THE HIRE SYSTEM.

A DRAWING-ROOM COMEDY.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

LORD WILLIAM CHESTERTON, rich and eccentric bachelor.

SIR GEORGE MARCHMONT, his friend.

MISS SUSAN DALRYMPLE, friend of Lady Gwen. Butterfield.

LADY GWENDOLEN BUTTERFIELD, widow, sister to Lord W. Chesterton.

MISS BLANCHE SOMERTON, in love with Lord W. Chesterton.

Footmen.

SCENE.—*Drawing-room of LADY GWENDOLEN BUTTERFIELD'S house near Wargrave-on-Thames. It looks out towards river, with garden between.*

SCENE I.—LADY GWEN. BUTTERFIELD'S
*drawing-room, house on Thames,
near Wargrave. Drawing-room
looks on garden.*

*Enter LADY GWEN. and LORD WIL-
LIAM CHESTERTON, talking.*

LADY GWEN.

So you have got back from Paris again after leaving me to face all your difficulties for you. (*Sits on sofa.*) I do wish you would try to find some one to settle down with. That detestable Lady Jessop follows me everywhere, thrusting her daughter on me, and asking me all sorts of embarrassing questions; and that horrid little widow with the bronze hair and brazen face dodges about after me till I feel I could murder her. I am a perfect martyr to your matrimonial prospects. Can you find no nice girl who will put up with your eccentricities for the sake of your fortune?

LORD WILLIAM.

Plenty, only I don't ask them to. The sacrifice would be more than I deserve—or desire.

[*Sits on arm of chair.*

LADY GWEN.

I really think you might have some consideration for me. One would

think you must be dreadfully unattractive if you cannot find one girl who can really care for you. There must be *some one* who could do it.

LORD WILLIAM.

No doubt, but I shall never know her.

LADY GWEN.

There is Blanche Somerton.

LORD WILLIAM.

There is.

LADY GWEN.

Now, I really think she cares for you.

LORD WILLIAM.

But I don't care for her.

LADY GWEN.

You might do worse.

LORD WILLIAM.

I might do better—I hope I shall.

LADY GWEN.

Have you never met a really nice, disinterested girl?

LORD WILLIAM.

Yes, but she was always engaged to some one else.

LADY GWEN. (*jumps up and crosses to*
LORD WILLIAM).

Upon my word you are too aggravating. I must insist, William, that you get engaged to some one if you mean to remain under my roof. My nerves will simply hold out no longer

under the strain of warding off designing females. For Heaven's sake get engaged to some one, even if it were only for a fortnight. You need not marry her, but for Heaven's sake do something.

LORD WILLIAM.

I will go abroad.

LADY GWEN. (*sinking on chair*).

And leave me to go about alone ! How selfish men are.

LORD WILLIAM.

My dear Gwen., I don't want to go abroad. I am not the type of Englishman who likes killing things perpetually, and eternal yachting palls ; but you ask impossibilities.

[*Rises and walks up and down.*]

LADY GWEN.

Not at all. I don't ask you to marry, even. I only ask you to get engaged.

LORD WILLIAM.

That leads to marriage.

LADY GWEN.

By no means. 'At the worst you can say there is *delirium tremens* in the family. I am sure you are eccentric enough for anything, just like my poor father. No one knows how eccentric *he* was, and so rude—thank goodness, you aren't that ?

Enter SIR GEORGE MARCHMONT.

Ah, here is Sir George, just in time. We were discussing William's future. He must positively get engaged. I am worn out with facing people who want him as a son-in-law, or as a provision for their old age.

SIR GEORGE.

And what does William say ?

LADY GWEN.

William keeps out of the way, and when things become serious he has urgent business in Paris. As this is my day at home I have no doubt you will shortly see some of William's pseudo-fiancées arrive to claim him. The scenes I go through. . . .

Enter MISS DALRYMPLE.

LADY GWEN. (*coming forward*).

Ah, Miss Dalrymple, what a pleasure to see you again ! I was just going to show Sir George Marchmont (*both bow*) my Indian curios. Will you amuse my brother for a moment ? (*Introducing*) My brother, Lord William Chèsterton—ah, you know William, I see, already. (*Aside*) They always know William.

[*Goes to the left with* SIR GEORGE.

LORD WILLIAM (*centre*).

Miss Dalrymple, by all that's fortunate ! What an age since I have seen you ?

MISS DALRYMPLE (*tragically*).

Ah, no one ever meets me now in society.

LORD WILLIAM.

Why not ? Have you run away with some one else's husband ?

MISS DALRYMPLE.

My mother has turned serious. She does not approve of the world. She says it is hollow. Do you find it hollow ?

LORD WILLIAM.

On the contrary, I find it full of inconvenient complications.

MISS DALRYMPLE.

Ah, you are lucky. (LORD WILLIAM *draws chair for her and sits beside her*.) You can do what you like ; you need not sit at home and sew scratchy shirts for Honolulu, when you are dying to amuse yourself.

LORD WILLIAM.

No, but I should like to. May I come and sew too ?

MISS DALRYMPLE.

We admit no one but missionaries.

LORD WILLIAM.

Would you not admit me ?

MISS DALRYMPLE.

No ; you are of the world worldly—and nice.

LORD WILLIAM.

You must be a cheerful lot. You should marry.

MISS DALRYMPLE.

Marry? Good gracious! I told you I wanted to amuse myself.

LORD WILLIAM.

You want to amuse yourself, and you don't want to marry—what do you propose to do?

MISS DALRYMPLE (*despairingly*).

I can't think; but something must be done, or I shall murder a missionary.

LORD WILLIAM

(*walks up and down room*).

(*Aside*) This is my chance. I wonder how she would take it. (*Aloud*) Should you think me very eccentric if I proposed you should become engaged in a *perfectly platonic* way to me for a month or two.

MISS DALRYMPLE.

How can you be so ridiculous? I thought you were going to propose a real solution of the difficulty.

LORD WILLIAM.

So I am. (*Stops.*) My sister has just been complaining that I am not an engaged man. You complain that you are not amused. Let us amuse ourselves in spite of our relations. We will take each other on the hire system for a month or two. You will ward off designing females. I shall not be troublesome. I am not in the least domestic.

MISS DALRYMPLE.

It almost sounds feasible.

LORD WILLIAM.

It sounds *quite* feasible.

MISS DALRYMPLE.

You are sure you would not think the worse of me?

LORD WILLIAM.

The worse? I should worship you. You would be my salvation.

MISS DALRYMPLE.

And you would—you wouldn't—you would take no mean advantages?

LORD WILLIAM.

Never, as I am a mortal man.

MISS DALRYMPLE.

What fun it would be! I almost think I will.

LORD WILLIAM.

Think it quite, not almost.

MISS DALRYMPLE.

I—I—oh, what fun! I *will*!

LORD WILLIAM.

You swear? [*Holds out his hand.*]

MISS DALRYMPLE.

I swear. [*Puts hers in it.*]

LORD WILLIAM.

I may have to kiss you now and then just in the way of business.

MISS DALRYMPLE (*skipping off chair*).
Never!

LORD WILLIAM.

I fear I must, unpleasant as it may be to us both.

MISS DALRYMPLE.

Never. How—how—Samuel would not like it.

LORD WILLIAM.

Who is Samuel?

MISS DALRYMPLE.

I have to consider Samuel.

LORD WILLIAM.

Are you engaged? Capital, capital! You must square Samuel, and tell him you've hired me for two months to take his part. Where is Samuel?

MISS DALRYMPLE.

In India.

LORD WILLIAM.

Oh! then I would not disturb Samuel's peace of mind for so short a time. Perhaps it will answer all purposes if I sometimes pass my arm round your waist.

MISS DALRYMPLE.

Certainly not.

LORD WILLIAM.

There must be a few endearments to make it seem lifelike. I must insist on this. I shall of course call you darling, Susan darling, it sounds very well.

MISS DALRYMPLE.

Certainly not. Samuel would not like it.

LORD WILLIAM.

I must insist that Samuel shall not be flung in my face every time I make a suggestion. Here is my sister—I must tell her.

[*Re-enter LADY GWEN.*]

MISS DALRYMPLE.

Nonsense. (*He insists.*) Oh, very well then, but I must go first. Be sure you explain properly. (*To LADY GWENDOLINE, confusedly*) I am afraid I must go. Lord William will tell you. I am obliged to—to—to— Good-bye.

LORD WILLIAM.

I shall come and see you downstairs (*aside*), darling. Susan, darling. (*MISS DALRYMPLE tears the door open. Exeunt. LORD WILLIAM returns and closes door.*) Congratulate me—I am engaged.

LADY GWEN.

William, what on earth have you and Miss Dalrymple been about? Designing little creature! I thought you were safe for five minutes, I'm sure.

LORD WILLIAM.

For two months from this date Miss Dalrymple and I are engaged. I am happy, you are happy, she is happy, we are all happy. You bade me become engaged. I am engaged. Behold me!

LADY GWEN. (*aside*).

Another of William's scrapes.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—*Same room as before.*

Enter LORD WILLIAM.

LORD WILLIAM.

Susan! Susan!! Susan!!!

MISS DALRYMPLE (*running in*).

I do wish you would stop howling Susan all over the house in that senseless way. How can you be so stupid?

LORD WILLIAM.

It makes our engagement public. It can't be too public to please me.

Besides, it makes you look nice when you are confused.

MISS DALRYMPLE.

I am sure any one would look confused who had to do with a lunatic like you. My dear William, every one must know we are engaged from the grooms upwards and downwards.

LORD WILLIAM.

Do you think so? That's capital—and you called me your dear William. You are learning to be a little familiar,—that is a great improvement, and will make things much easier and pleasanter. Here's some one coming. Let me adjust my arm round your waist.

[*Advances with his arm in position.*]

MISS DALRYMPLE (*skipping away*).

I insist on your going to the other side of the room and keeping there. Oh, Heavens, what an awful thing it is to have any one on the hire system! You're a thousand times worse than Samuel.

LORD WILLIAM.

Hang Samuel!

[*Steps behind her.*]

MISS DALRYMPLE.

Well, you are unkind when Samuel is your safeguard and—and—and—deposit receipt. (*Looking round—LORD WILLIAM strokes her hair effusively.*) Is there any one coming? for if there isn't you might take your hand away. Oh, it's Sir George.

Enter SIR GEORGE MARCHMONT.

SIR GEORGE.

Oh! I beg your pardon—I was looking for Lady Gwen.

[*Prepares to go.*]

MISS DALRYMPLE.

No, no; don't go. (*Runs after him and catches him by arm.*) William is going.

LORD WILLIAM.

Susan, I insist that you take your hand off Sir George's arm. Remember you are engaged to me, not Sir George.

MISS DALRYMPLE.

William, you were going.

LORD WILLIAM.

I was not.

MISS DALRYMPLE.

William, you will go?

LORD WILLIAM.

I will not.

MISS DALRYMPLE.

Then I will, with Sir George.
Good-bye, dear.

[Kisses her hand and exit with
SIR GEORGE. LORD WILLIAM
follows, shouting "Susan!"

Enter LADY GWEN. and BLANCHE
SOMERTON.

LADY GWEN.

William!

LORD WILLIAM.

I can't stop. I am going with
Susan.

LADY GWEN.

I must insist that you don't rush
after Susan all day long. Even the
very servants sniggle at the name
of Susan now.

LORD WILLIAM.

Why should I not? If I don't
keep my eye on her, she flirts with
George Marchmont, and turns his
head when she ought to be turning
mine.

LADY GWEN.

I am sure I don't wonder. She
must be thankful to get rid of you
for a few minutes.

LORD WILLIAM.

She has no business to wish to get
rid of me.

LADY GWEN.

Well, at any rate you can stay
here now and entertain Blanche
while I go and look after those
wearisome Jessops.

LORD WILLIAM (*aside*).

You're never going to leave me
alone with Blanche?

VOL. CLXX.—NO. MXXXIII.

LADY GWEN.

(*aside to LORD WILLIAM*).

Why not? You are an engaged
man; it is quite safe to leave you
with any one now, thank goodness.
[Exit.

MISS SOMERTON (*tragically*).

I never thought when I parted
from you last I should meet you
next as an engaged man.

[Sits on sofa.

LORD WILLIAM.

Why not? Did you think it im-
possible for any one to love me?

[Sits on arm of sofa.

MISS SOMERTON.

Oh no, of course not; but I thought
you hated the thought of matrimony.

LORD WILLIAM.

So I do; at least so I did till I
met Susan: she's breaking me in.

MISS SOMERTON.

It does seem funny. Do you think
you will like being married?

LORD WILLIAM.

I should like anything with Susan.

MISS SOMERTON.

You have been so often reported
engaged. I remember you were once
said to be engaged to me——

LORD WILLIAM.

Was I? (*Recoils.*) I must tell
Susan she must look after me care-
fully when I am with you.

MISS SOMERTON.

Are you so afraid you will not keep
true?

LORD WILLIAM.

Not in the least; but one is never
safe from designing persons till one
is married, and it is now Susan's
duty to see that I do not fall into
their clutches.

MISS SOMERTON.

Surely there are women who would
have suited you better and under-
stood you better?

LORD WILLIAM.

No; I don't think so. Susan
understands me as few do.

2 R

MISS SOMERTON.

She is fortunate, and very clever.

LORD WILLIAM.

You see she knows what I mean.

MISS SOMERTON.

Does no other woman do so ?

[*Reproachfully.*]

LORD WILLIAM.

Well, you see they generally think I mean more than I do. Now Susan doesn't: she thinks I mean less.

MISS SOMERTON.

I see. She can't care for you much—

LORD WILLIAM.

On the contrary, she finds me delightful. I must really go and see what she is up to with George.

MISS SOMERTON.

You don't seem to have much confidence in her. Can you not be away from her for five minutes ?

LORD WILLIAM.

Not without getting very nervous.

Re-enter SUSAN and SIR GEORGE.

Ah, here she is, making eyes at George as hard as she can. I must put a stop to that.

MISS SOMERTON

(*laying hand on LORD WILLIAM'S arm*).

And yet you said she loved you.

LORD WILLIAM.

On the contrary, I said she understood me. Susan !

MISS DALRYMPLE.

Good gracious ! here's William again. Thank goodness ! he has another woman with him. Well, William dear, I am glad to see you so well employed.

LORD WILLIAM (*aside*).

I am not well employed. Miss Somerton has all but proposed to me. You promised to protect me ; do you call this protecting me ? You show me no attention. You must do something marked or she will snap me up in spite of you.

MISS DALRYMPLE

(*suddenly hurls herself into LORD WILLIAM'S arms*).

Will this do ?

LORD WILLIAM.

Pretty well. Couldn't you say something as well ?

MISS DALRYMPLE (*very loud*).

I did think I could trust you !

[MISS SOMERTON *shudders visibly*.]

SIR GEORGE.

Hullo ! quick here ! Miss Somerton is fainting.

[LORD WILLIAM *hurries back*.]

SIR GEORGE (*coming forward*).

Miss Dalrymple, you said your engagement to William was simply a comedy ? Do you call this a comedy ?

MISS DALRYMPLE.

Distinctly.

SIR GEORGE.

Do you mean to tell me that you don't care for Chesterton when you embrace him before my eyes ?

MISS DALRYMPLE.

Certainly. I only wanted to make an agreeable diversion. I have done it. Go and help Miss Somerton.

SIR GEORGE.

She doesn't want me. She has Chesterton.

MISS DALRYMPLE.

My William !

SIR GEORGE (*turning away*).

Damn !

MISS DALRYMPLE.

Oh, you are much worse than William. (*Pause*.) Miss Somerton seems better. My William has restored her.

[LORD WILLIAM *comes forward supporting MISS SOMERTON on his arm*.]

SIR GEORGE.

We are not wanted, evidently.

MISS DALRYMPLE.

I am very much wanted, I think. I must protect William.

SIR GEORGE.

Nonsense, he is perfectly happy.
Come back to the Den.

[*Tries to lead her away.*]

LORD WILLIAM (*flies after*).

Susan, Susan, I will not be left alone again.

MISS DALRYMPLE.

You seem to be getting on nicely without me, dear. [*Moves away.*]

SIR GEORGE.

Miss Dalrymple is coming with me.

LORD WILLIAM.

Miss Dalrymple is staying with me.

SIR GEORGE.

Miss Dalrymple prefers to come with me.

LORD WILLIAM.

Miss Dalrymple stays with me when I desire it. Susan, I desire it.

MISS DALRYMPLE.

I think I should prefer to go with Sir George; we were having such a nice talk.

LORD WILLIAM.

Oh, were you? Well, you can continue it with me.

MISS DALRYMPLE.

Oh, you and I have already discussed the subjects.

LORD WILLIAM.

Which subjects?

MISS DALRYMPLE.

Love and marriage, dear.

LORD WILLIAM

(*glaring at SIR GEORGE*).

May I ask, sir, what business you have to discuss such subjects with my wife?

SIR GEORGE.

She is not your wife.

LORD WILLIAM.

She is going to be.

SIR GEORGE.

May I ask, sir, if that is the case, why I find you squeezing the hand of another lady?

LORD WILLIAM.

That was Miss Dalrymple's fault; she went away and flirted with you

when she should have been looking after me.

SIR GEORGE.

Miss Dalrymple is incapable of flirting.

LORD WILLIAM (*bursting out laughing*).

Bless my soul! this is another of Susan's admirers. (*Aside*) And how about Samuel, my nice young lady? (*Aloud*) Miss Dalrymple ought to be incapable of flirting, for she is engaged to me. Tell Sir George you don't care for any one's attentions but mine, my love.

MISS DALRYMPLE.

I don't want the attentions of either of you. Miss Somerton and I are going to have a chat.

[*Goes across the room, where MISS SOMERTON is arranging flowers.*]

MISS SOMERTON.

Hadn't you better go with Sir George? He seems to want it so much.

MISS DALRYMPLE.

And leave William with you? I couldn't trust him.

MISS SOMERTON.

Surely you cannot have much confidence in him.

MISS DALRYMPLE.

Oh, it is not he of whom I am afraid.

MISS SOMERTON.

Perhaps you had better let Sir George take him away, then there will be no danger of any mischief happening to any one.

MISS DALRYMPLE.

What a good idea! (*Calls*) William, neither you nor Sir George are wanted. You can go.

LORD WILLIAM.

I am all obedience, my darling. Come, George, the ladies don't want us. (*Moves to exit.*) After you.

SIR GEORGE.

Pray go on.

LORD WILLIAM.

I couldn't precede my guest.

SIR GEORGE.

I shouldn't like to leave you here.

LORD WILLIAM.

I must bid good-bye to Susan.

SIR GEORGE.

I can hardly go in so unceremonious a manner.

MISS DALRYMPLE (*stamping her foot*).

Will you go?

[*Shoving* LORD WILLIAM out.

Exeunt SIR GEORGE and LORD WILLIAM. MISS SOMERTON walks across room to MISS DALRYMPLE.

MISS SOMERTON.

Lord William does not seem inclined to leave Sir George behind, does he? Surely your engagement was very unexpected. I heard nothing of it before I came here.

MISS DALRYMPLE.

Well, perhaps it did seem unexpected to those who did not know us very well.

MISS SOMERTON.

But is it true?

MISS DALRYMPLE.

I cannot deny it.

MISS SOMERTON.

Have you known him long, may I ask?

MISS DALRYMPLE.

About six months.

MISS SOMERTON.

Six months! I have known him for years.

MISS DALRYMPLE.

Then you are in a position to tell me candidly what you think of him as a husband.

MISS SOMERTON.

I—I—it can hardly matter what I think of him in that capacity.

MISS DALRYMPLE.

One likes to hear what one can pick up of one's future husband, you see.

MISS SOMERTON.

I should hardly be bold enough to recommend him as a husband to you. I confess I cannot comprehend either

of you. Your engagement seems so little serious.

MISS DALRYMPLE.

So little serious? Ah! how little you know us both.

MISS SOMERTON.

Lord William has a heart beneath all his nonsense, but it does not seem to me you care to touch it. Do you know (*rises and wrings her hands, walking up and down room*)—do you know anything of him really? Do you know him as I know him—I who have known him and cared for him for years—I who know him as no one else—

MISS DALRYMPLE.

Good Heavens! What have I done, Miss Somerton? Do you really care for Lord William? Does he care for you?

MISS SOMERTON (*agitated*).

What can it matter? You are to be his wife: surely it is cruel to ask. It matters nothing to you whose heart you break to become so.

MISS DALRYMPLE.

That is unfair. I never for a moment supposed you cared (*aside*), and I am dreadfully afraid William doesn't care a scrap for her. (*Aloud*) You seemed to care so much for society, and he doesn't, you know. Do you really think you have so much in common?

MISS SOMERTON.

Apparently not, since he cares for you.

MISS DALRYMPLE.

Oh, he doesn't care for me.

MISS SOMERTON.

Not care for you? But you are engaged.

MISS DALRYMPLE.

Yes—at present.

MISS SOMERTON.

Don't you care for him?

MISS DALRYMPLE (*starts up*).

We are diving too deeply into the mysteries of my engagement.

MISS SOMERTON.

If you don't love him, and he does not care for you, does it ever occur to you that you may be——

[*Buries her head and sobs.*]

MISS DALRYMPLE (*rushing at her*).

Miss Somerton! Good gracious! how awful! What can I do with her? Come away, come away, here's some one coming. [*Drags her out of room.*]

* * * * *

Enter MISS DALRYMPLE and SIR GEORGE MARCHMONT *by French window.*

SIR GEORGE.

Well, I think you are rather hard on me, Miss Dalrymple. You tell me you are not going to marry Chester-ton, and yet that you cannot marry any one else till your engagement with him is at an end. I confess I do not understand the arrangement with him very clearly.

MISS DALRYMPLE.

No, it *is* confusing. But if you like to ask Lord William to explain it, he has my permission.

[*Sits herself on sofa.*]

SIR GEORGE.

May I ask him?

[*Sits himself on arm behind.*]

MISS DALRYMPLE.

Certainly; but I don't think he is in the least likely to tell you.

SIR GEORGE.

I shall pin him down somehow.

[*LORD WILLIAM'S voice behind.*]

LORD WILLIAM.

Susan! Susan!!

SIR GEORGE.

There he is.

Enter LORD WILLIAM.

MISS DALRYMPLE.

Oh yes, wherever I am, my charming lover is sure to be somewhere near hovering over me.

LORD WILLIAM.

I have had such a hunt for you. You are quite forgetting your duties to me.

MISS DALRYMPLE.

My dear William, mayn't I have ten minutes for myself sometimes?

LORD WILLIAM.

You are not having ten minutes for yourself, Marchmont is having them. That is what I object to. You are always giving minutes to him. Come now, George, clear out, Miss Dalrymple is sick of you.

MISS DALRYMPLE.

Oh no, not a bit. Sir George was just asking some particulars of our engagement, and I said you would furnish them.

LORD WILLIAM.

Oh, you did? Well, I shall not. George is of a prying nature. He is a deal too inquisitive. Why does he want to know? I expect he has been trying to tamper with your affections.

MISS DALRYMPLE.

Well, you wouldn't mind, would you?

LORD WILLIAM.

Not mind? Of course I mind. I want you to come to the smoking-room and look at some diamond things that have come from town.

MISS DALRYMPLE.

I don't know anything about diamonds. Why do you want me to see them?

LORD WILLIAM.

They're for you. An engagement is nothing without diamonds.

[*MISS DALRYMPLE rises, SIR GEORGE saunters out of French window.*]

MISS DALRYMPLE.

Of course I can't take diamonds from you. I can't take anything but that amazing ring, which I shall return on my retirement from my duties.

LORD WILLIAM.

Not take them? Of course you must take them; even a savage hangs his squaw over with glass beads. You must have glass beads; no engagement is business-like without.

MISS DALRYMPLE.

So much the better, for I want to say that this stupid business must come to an end.

LORD WILLIAM.

Come to an end? It has just begun. It is doing beautifully. It is the best thing I have done for years.

MISS DALRYMPLE.

Well, it must come to an end.

LORD WILLIAM (*angrily*).

This is George's doing; but you won't find him so accommodating as I am. He won't go shares with Samuel.

MISS DALRYMPLE.

Oh, bother Samuel!

LORD WILLIAM.

That's what I said, and you snapped my head off. Well, George and Samuel won't work together as Samuel and I have worked. George is a jealous chap. I'm not a bit jealous, or I couldn't have stood Samuel.

MISS DALRYMPLE.

You have nothing to be jealous of.

LORD WILLIAM

(*walks up and down rather excitedly*).

I might be jealous of George, but I'm not. But I command you not to dance more than twice this evening with George. I will not have false hopes encouraged in George.

MISS DALRYMPLE

(*laying her hand on LORD WILLIAM'S arm*).

I wish you to understand that this insane arrangement must come to an end. I have no business to pretend I am engaged to you. It is making other people needlessly unhappy.

LORD WILLIAM.

It is making me quite happy and comfortable.

MISS DALRYMPLE.

Perhaps; but we must consider the feelings of others.

LORD WILLIAM (*quickly*).

Whose? George's?

MISS DALRYMPLE

(*angrily, starting away from him*).

Every one's.

LORD WILLIAM.

You mean George's. George isn't a bit suited to you. He has a beastly temper. I will not give you up to make George happy.

MISS DALRYMPLE

(*walking up and down angrily*).

I was not thinking of Sir George.

LORD WILLIAM.

Oh, you need not think of Samuel. He seems accommodating enough.

MISS DALRYMPLE.

I was not thinking of Samuel.

LORD WILLIAM.

I knew it. George has been worming himself in behind my back. (*Leaning on back of sofa and bringing his hand down angrily on it.*) I will not have George for my rival. He is my best friend, and I know he would make a beastly husband. You will be good enough to avoid George in future. He is not a nice friend for you.

MISS DALRYMPLE.

Well, I have warned you our arrangement comes to an end to-night. I will keep it up till to-morrow morning, and I shall leave then.

LORD WILLIAM.

To visit George's relations, no doubt.

[*Furiously strides across the room and catches her by the arm.*]

MISS DALRYMPLE (*coldly*).

To visit any one I please.

LORD WILLIAM

(*takes her hand and draws her to centre of room*).

You shall not. You shall become engaged in all seriousness to me.

MISS DALRYMPLE
(*shrugging her shoulders*).

Oh dear no, you are embarrassing enough now, but you would be appalling then; besides, you forget there is Samuel.

LORD WILLIAM.
Damn Samuel!

MISS DALRYMPLE
(*tearing her hand away*).

Thank you very much. I am going.

LORD WILLIAM.
Oh, go! Go to George! (*stamps*.)
And what about the glass beads?

MISS DALRYMPLE.
You can give them to me when I marry George . . . (*going out and looking over shoulder*) or Samuel!
[*Exit*.

LORD WILLIAM
(*Soliloquy. Strolling across room and sitting on back of sofa*).

After all, getting engaged isn't so nice as I expected. I am falling damnably in love with little Susan, and I am on the verge of quarrelling with my best friend. *Cherchez la femme!* It's always the woman. If Susan hadn't suggested that she wanted to get away from home, . . . but of course I have to take all the risks. Poor little Susan. Yes, I am really in love with Susan. She's a shocking little flirt, but she suits me, Susan does, and she doesn't care a twopenny rushlight for me, . . . heartless little wretch. And then there's Samuel. I wonder how she means to square Samuel after this. I don't care—I don't want her to square Samuel. I want her to marry me. (*Rising and walking about, head down and hands in his pockets*.) I am a much better match for her than Samuel. Samuel wouldn't make her a good husband. Samuel has an Indian liver. He pegs. Samuel orders her about as if she were a nigger. I won't have my little Susan treated like a nigger. (*Excitedly*.)

No, she's Samuel's little Susan. Hang Samuel! He's a bilious beast. He's as yellow as an orange. Susan shall not marry Samuel, it would be profanity. My little Susan—my own nice little, dear little Susan. I must go and look for Susan.

SCENE III.—*Same room.*

Enter LADY GWENDOLEN, MISS SOMERTON, and MISS DALRYMPLE *in full evening dress*. MISS DALRYMPLE *carries gorgeous shower bouquet*. LADY GWENDOLEN and MISS DALRYMPLE *cross room together*.

LADY GWEN.
I am afraid you will find William's eccentricities rather difficult to endure, Susan, but perhaps you are sufficiently modern to prefer excitement to happiness.

MISS DALRYMPLE.
At all events, I do not expect our home life to be dull. Dear William is full of delightful surprises.

LADY GWEN.
His latest surprise is that he is jealous. (*Laughs*.) William jealous! It is too funny, but it is very good for him. You should keep it up. It may be the saving of him; he is far too much accustomed to have everything he wants. Every one has dropped into his mouth hitherto—haven't they, Blanche?

MISS SOMERTON
(*coming from fireplace*).
How should I know, dear? I never had anything to do with Lord William's mouth.

LADY GWEN.
No. [*Smiles meaningly*.

MISS SOMERTON.
Nor do I know how much he can swallow.

LADY GWEN.
He has swallowed Susan, for which Heaven be thanked.

MISS DALRYMPLE.

Thank you very much, dear Lady Gwen.

LADY GWEN.

Oh, you don't know how frightened I have been. At one time I was even afraid he would marry a New Woman.

MISS DALRYMPLE.

Oh, he wouldn't have a chance with a New Woman—he is not depraved enough. He would have no interest for her.

LADY GWEN.

What a heavenly bouquet, dear ! William has distinguished himself.

MISS DALRYMPLE.

Oh, this is not his—Sir George gave it me.

LADY GWEN.

Did William forget ?

MISS DALRYMPLE.

No ; but I liked this one the best.

MISS SOMERTON.

Lord William will be very angry.

MISS DALRYMPLE.

Well, he will have to recover himself.

MISS SOMERTON.

Are you not afraid of his being angry ?

MISS DALRYMPLE.

Not a bit.

MISS SOMERTON.

I think you like to wound him.

MISS DALRYMPLE.

I delight in it ; don't you ?

[*Goes across room and admires herself in glass.*]

MISS SOMERTON (*following*).

No, I should not like to give him a minute's uneasiness.

MISS DALRYMPLE.

Oh, shouldn't you ? I give him hours.

MISS SOMERTON.

I should not like to make any one I loved unhappy.

MISS DALRYMPLE.

Oh, but I don't love him—at least,

I love him too much to spoil his character by pampering his weaknesses.

MISS SOMERTON.

He has none.

[*Tragically and enthusiastically.*]

MISS DALRYMPLE (*bursts out laughing*).

Ha—ha—ha—ha ! No weak points, ha—ha—ha ! Why, he's all weak points together, that is why he amuses me so. [*Sits down on sofa.*]

MISS SOMERTON.

Amuses you ?

MISS DALRYMPLE.

Yes, immensely. Doesn't William amuse you ?

MISS SOMERTON.

Never.

MISS DALRYMPLE.

Perhaps you find it difficult to feel amused. Oh, here they come.

[*Jumps up.*]

LORD WILLIAM and SIR GEORGE
enter.

MISS DALRYMPLE.

Now you will see one of dear William's weak spots. (*Goes quickly across the room to SIR GEORGE.*) Oh, dear Sir George, what a lovely bouquet you have sent me ! I never saw anything lovelier.

[*Sniffs it appreciatively.*]

SIR GEORGE (*with pleased smile*).

I am honoured by your accepting it.

[*Goes across to MISS SOMERTON and sits beside her.*]

LORD WILLIAM (*angrily*).

Is that George's bouquet ?

MISS DALRYMPLE.

Yes, dearest.

LORD WILLIAM.

Did you not receive mine ?

MISS DALRYMPLE.

Yes, dearest.

LORD WILLIAM.

Why are you not wearing it ?

MISS DALRYMPLE.

Because I liked his best, dear William.

LORD WILLIAM.

Would you be good enough to send for mine?

MISS DALRYMPLE.

Why, dearest?

LORD WILLIAM.

Because you are engaged to me, not to Sir George.

MISS DALRYMPLE.

Oh, I don't think our very slight engagement counts in such matters, and this is such a lovely bouquet.

LORD WILLIAM.

So was mine, I hope.

MISS DALRYMPLE.

Hum—moderately.

LORD WILLIAM.

At any rate, I wish you to wear it; will you send for it?

MISS DALRYMPLE.

No, dearest.

LORD WILLIAM.

Then I shall.

[Crosses room and rings.

MISS DALRYMPLE.

By all means, my love.

LORD WILLIAM (returning to her side).

I am determined you shall wear my bouquet to-night, not Marchmont's.

MISS DALRYMPLE.

Dearest, this is a free country. Have you ever heard of the Magna Charta?

Enter Footman. LORD WILLIAM signs to him.

LORD WILLIAM.

(Footman crosses room).

Tell Miss Dalrymple's maid to give you the bouquet I sent for her.

FOOTMAN.

Yes, my lord.

[Exit.

MISS DALRYMPLE.

You are quite determined, dearest?

LORD WILLIAM.

Quite.

MISS DALRYMPLE.

No compromise?

[Silence.

Re-enter Footman with bouquet exactly matching in flowers MISS DALRYMPLE'S dress.

MISS DALRYMPLE.

Take it, with Lord William's compliments, to Miss Somerton.

FOOTMAN.

Yes, miss.

LORD WILLIAM.

Stop. (Grasps her hand and takes SIR GEORGE'S bouquet, dropping it on floor. Takes his own from Footman and thrusts it into MISS DALRYMPLE'S hand). You shall wear mine.

[Exit Footman.

MISS DALRYMPLE.

How dare you? (Stands gazing at him, then crosses to MISS SOMERTON.) Miss Somerton, it seems the bouquet Lord William intended for you came to me by—mistake. I am so sorry. [Hands it to MISS SOMERTON.

MISS SOMERTON (clasping it).

How lovely! Oh, how much too good of you, Lord William! (Aside) I was sure he liked me best really.

MISS DALRYMPLE (crossing room again and pointing to the bouquet on the floor).

My bouquet, please.

LORD WILLIAM.

If you wear it I will break every bone in Marchmont's body.

MISS DALRYMPLE.

Pooh! Don't be stupid.

LORD WILLIAM.

And I will make you repent it to the last day of your life.

MISS DALRYMPLE.

How alarming! We are going in to dinner now.

LORD WILLIAM.

You will find you cannot play fast and loose with two men at the same time.

MISS DALRYMPLE.

Three, dear; you forget Samuel.

LORD WILLIAM.

Dozens probably. You forget yourself and me.

MISS DALRYMPLE.

Oh, William, dear, how naughty you make me! (*Giggles.*) I am waiting for my bouquet, and Miss Somerton is waiting to be taken to dinner.

LORD WILLIAM.

You shall be sorry for it, madam.

[*Stalks off to MISS SOMERTON.*

MISS DALRYMPLE *picks up bouquet and walks off.* SIR GEORGE *follows with* LADY GWEN.

* * * * *

Re-enter SIR GEORGE and LORD WILLIAM, talking as they enter.

LORD WILLIAM.

I should esteem it a favour, George, if you would not make love to Miss Dalrymple when she is to be my wife.

SIR GEORGE.

She will not be your wife ; she told me so herself.

LORD WILLIAM.

Oh, she did, did she? Well, you must have mistaken her meaning, for she is engaged to me.

SIR GEORGE.

I do not believe it.

LORD WILLIAM.

Oh, I lie, do I?

SIR GEORGE.

I think it quite possible.

LORD WILLIAM.

We will arrange that part of it presently ; meantime you would believe the lady's word, I suppose?

SIR GEORGE.

I would believe Miss Dalrymple in everything.

LORD WILLIAM.

You would,—she is fortunate.

SIR GEORGE.

I would.

LORD WILLIAM.

Then I shall convince you easily.

Be good enough to remain here while I fetch Miss Dalrymple.

[*Leaves the room.* SIR GEORGE *goes up to mirror and arranges his moustache.*

Re-enter MISS DALRYMPLE and LORD WILLIAM. MISS DALRYMPLE *crosses room to* SIR GEORGE.

MISS DALRYMPLE.

Lord William said you wanted me.

SIR GEORGE.

It was Lord William's wish entirely. I beg you will believe that I was not guilty of the impertinence of sending for you, Miss Dalrymple.

LORD WILLIAM.

No; but he will profit by your accidental presence. Sir George seems to be labouring under a misunderstanding, which I must ask you to remove for him.

MISS DALRYMPLE.

Certainly.

[*Looks from one to the other.*

LORD WILLIAM.

I am sorry to have to allude to perfectly private matters, but Sir George insists. Did you not agree, about five weeks ago, may I ask, to become engaged to me?

MISS DALRYMPLE.

Yes.

LORD WILLIAM.

Did you not swear, when I proposed that you should become engaged to me, that all other claims should be disregarded but mine?

MISS DALRYMPLE.

Yes, but— [*Agitatedly.*

LORD WILLIAM.

Stay. (*Holds up hand.*) Was not our engagement made independent of your affections and for our mutual interests?

MISS DALRYMPLE.

You are putting it unfairly.

LORD WILLIAM.

I am putting it truthfully. Was it not exactly as I have said?

MISS DALRYMPLE.

Yes, but you forget—

LORD WILLIAM.

I forget nothing. It is you who have forgotten.

MISS DALRYMPLE.

You have forgotten to say that I never promised to marry you.

LORD WILLIAM.

Sir George will believe that or not as he pleases. An engagement, an oath, even a lady's, is not lightly taken about a small matter, he will understand. (*To SIR GEORGE*) Are you satisfied?

SIR GEORGE.

Less than ever.

LORD WILLIAM.

You believe we are *both* lying, then? In Miss Dalrymple's name and my own I thank you.

SIR GEORGE.

I believe you have manœuvred Miss Dalrymple into some devilish arrangement to suit your own selfishness, which she cannot get out of without breaking some stupid sort of oath that you have dodged her into.

LORD WILLIAM.

You believe we are both lying? You dare to say to me that Miss Dalrymple, my affianced wife, is lying? You obstinate devil!

[*Springs at him.* MISS DALRYMPLE *steps in between and stretches out her arms to* LORD WILLIAM.

MISS DALRYMPLE.

Oh, William, William, for Heaven's sake, for *my* sake!

[*Staggeres and falls into his arms.*

SIR GEORGE *springs forward.*

LORD WILLIAM *waves him away, and carries her across the room.*

LORD WILLIAM.

Stand back, sir. No one touches Miss Dalrymple but myself.

SCENE IV.—*Same room.*

Enter LADY GWEN. *and* LORD WILLIAM.

LADY GWEN.

Yes, I think the ball was a great success. Every one must have thought you a lucky man, for I never saw anything lovelier than Susan. Generally she has too little colour, but last night she had the loveliest colour I ever saw.

LORD WILLIAM.

She might well blush. She was making George's head go round and round with vanity by making love to him so openly.

LADY GWEN.

I hope not. I thought her enchanting, and in such spirits. I am glad I thought of having the dance, she seemed to enjoy it so much.

LORD WILLIAM.

I have no doubt she did. So did George. *I* didn't. It was beastly selfish of George.

LADY GWEN.

It is perfectly delightful to see you in earnest at last. (*Laughs.*) Jealous! You jealous! Well, Billy, we must allow that you have conscientiously earned your turn of it.

LORD WILLIAM.

What became of George? I never saw him after supper.

LADY GWEN. (*sitting down*).

Oh, George isn't a dancing man; I suppose he retired to the smoking-room. I am afraid Susan must be very tired—I have seen nothing of her this morning. (*Enter Footman.*) Ask Miss Dalrymple's maid whether Miss Dalrymple is rested, and whether she will be down at lunch-time.

FOOTMAN.

Miss Dalrymple and her maid left this morning, my lady.

LADY GWEN.

Left this morning? Nonsense. Ask Sir George Marchmont—

FOOTMAN.

Sir George left last night, my lady.

LADY GWEN.

Last night? Impossible! William, did you know that Susan and Sir George had left. [*Exit* Footman.]

LORD WILLIAM

(*stands still as if struck*).

Left? Susan and Sir George?

LADY GWEN.

Yes, so it seems. Did you know?

LORD WILLIAM (*dully*).

I know nothing. I wasn't likely to know, was I, if Susan and Marchmont were going away together?

LADY GWEN.

What are you thinking of? Sir George left last night, it seems. Did you know he was going?

LORD WILLIAM.

Am I Sir George's keeper?

LADY GWEN.

He must have been ill or something. I thought he did not look well when we left the dining-room. Did you notice anything the matter?

LORD WILLIAM.

I? Oh no—nothing.

LADY GWEN.

He did not seem ill?

LORD WILLIAM.

He seemed *unusually* robust and lively.

LADY GWEN.

I must go and see about it all. Susan must have left a message: perhaps her mother was ill. [*Exit*.

LORD WILLIAM (*rings bell hastily*).

Susan gone—and George. I should like to know what this means. (*Re-enter* Footman.) Did Miss Dalrymple leave no message for me, John?

FOOTMAN.

A letter, my lord.

LORD WILLIAM.

Confound you, then, why don't you give it me, you fool.

FOOTMAN.

I put it on your study table, my lord.

LORD WILLIAM.

Then be good enough to fetch it.

[*Exit* Footman.]

LORD WILLIAM

(*walking up and down*).

So she had so much consideration, the little flirt. I wonder what she has to say for herself. (*Re-enter* Footman *with letter on salver*.) Thank you—you can go. Susan's first letter to her William. I never saw little Susan's hand before. She writes a nice hand, like herself, the little wretch. (*Kisses the letter and opens it, sits and reads*.)—

“After your rudeness before dinner last night and your catechism afterwards for Sir George's benefit, you can hardly expect that I should keep up any more fictions for the protection of yourself or your fortune. I return home to-day. If we should ever meet again in society, which I hope we never may, we meet as strangers. SUSAN DALRYMPLE.”

No, we don't, Susan—we can't—we shan't. I couldn't do it, little woman. You shall make me crawl up and down London on all-fours if you like, but speak to me you shall, and love me you must. I swear it, Susan—and my oath is as good as yours any day. I will not be put aside. (*Stands up and gazes at the letter*.) I swear I WILL NOT give you up.

SCENE V.—*Same room.*

LADY GWEN. *sitting by fire.* LORD WILLIAM *stalking up and down room.*

Enter MISS SOMERTON *in walking dress.*

MISS SOMERTON.

I am so glad to find you at home. Now do tell me of this delightful new scandal. And it happened from your house when we were all there! How clever of you both to keep it so quiet!

LADY GWEN. (*coldly*).

Is there a new scandal?

MISS SOMERTON.

Why, you ought to know best, since it was from this house Miss Dalrymple ran away.

LADY GWEN.

Miss Dalrymple? Why, she is engaged to William.

MISS SOMERTON.

That is just what makes it so interesting.

LORD WILLIAM.

Pshaw! Who in the world invented such a cock-and-bull story about Susan?

MISS SOMERTON.

I don't think she ever *really* cared for you.

LORD WILLIAM (*seating himself*).

That is quite true. I object to being loved.

MISS SOMERTON.

How immoral! Of course, a girl who can engage herself for money is capable of anything.

LORD WILLIAM (*angrily*).

It was not for my money. It was for my defence, and to get away from Honolulu.

LADY GWEN.

My dear William, do pull yourself together and don't talk nonsense.

MISS SOMERTON.

From where?

LORD WILLIAM.

Honolulu. Susan and I understand each other perfectly. She wishes to get away from Honolulu shirts—I want to get away from British petticoats. It was all square. It was more. (*Proudly*) It was brilliant!

MISS SOMERTON.

But why did she run away?

LORD WILLIAM.

She did not run away. She can't run away. She stands between me and petticoats, and I stand between her and scratchy shirts. We are

going to found a society to prevent the trapping of innocent bachelors. We mean to be even with the designing female. Susan and I have master-minds; we do master-strokes. Our engagement was a master-stroke. If it had not been for meddling fools we should have undermined two crying evils—the British matron and the quality of Honolulu shirts; but, of course, inquisitive asses must poke their noses in and scare Susan. She is quite upset. I will *not* have Susan upset.

MISS SOMERTON.

Well, this is as good as the elopement. Are you really going to marry Miss Dalrymple?

LORD WILLIAM.

Of course. She will protect me from matrimony. She is to ward off promiscuous attentions. I am ashamed of your sex—they make me blush. I must be protected from blushing.

MISS SOMERTON.

Then you don't mind her having run off with Sir George?

LORD WILLIAM (*bounding up*).

She never ran away with Sir George. Go and see for yourself.

MISS SOMERTON (*rising*).

Oh dear no, thank you. Miss Dalrymple will not find many people to call on her now.

LORD WILLIAM.

My sister does.

MISS SOMERTON (*coldly*).

Does she?

LORD WILLIAM (*angrily*).

And all my friends will have to.

LADY GWEN (*rising and going towards them*).

Perhaps Miss Somerton will join our party for Henley next week. She will surely not refuse to see Miss Dalrymple under my roof.

LORD WILLIAM (*furiously*).

She will not be asked to do so by me.

LADY GWEN (*aside*).

She's dying to come. (*Aloud*) We shall be delighted if you will do so, Miss Somerton—shan't we, William?

LORD WILLIAM (*aside*).

Oh, she's dying to come, is she? Well, I don't know whether Susan will care to meet her. Susan is *very* particular.

LADY GWEN.

William and I will take no refusal. (*Aside*) Say something civil.

MISS SOMERTON.

It is most kind of you; I shall be delighted.

LORD WILLIAM (*aside*).

I will not. She is a gossiping wretch. (*Aloud*) It *must* be understood, Miss Somerton, that I will not hear a word against Miss Dalrymple.

MISS SOMERTON.

Oh, of course if you really mean to forgive her, it is most wise of you.

LORD WILLIAM (*firmly*).

It is only honourable. Miss Dalrymple needs no screening by me. She is a perfectly upright woman. I have no doubt the virtue is so rarely practised that you have a difficulty in recognising it—(*aside*) especially as you know nothing about it personally. (*Aside to his sister*) Take me away—I shall do this woman an injury.

LADY GWEN.

Then we shall count on your being of our party. (*Aside*) You goose, she will say *devilish* things of Susan if you aren't civil.

LORD WILLIAM (*affably*).

I am sure you ought to come, if only to satisfy your curiosity. (*Aside*) I will *not* be civil.

MISS SOMERTON.

Oh, as you insist, dear friends—

LADY GWEN.

Of course we do. William insists, I insist—don't you, William?

LORD WILLIAM.

I insist. [*Emphatically.*]

LADY GWEN.

You must be sure to come. Till the 5th, then, good-bye.

LORD WILLIAM (*aside*).

Offer her a diamond or two. She'll come like a lamb then. (*Aloud*) Good-bye; I hope Susan will consent to come *now*. [*Exit.*]

MISS SOMERTON (*Soliloquy. Angrily pacing to door of room*).

Insolent brute! Well, I shall go. As Lord William seems bent on marrying the woman, one may as well recognise her after a fashion. (*Aloud*) Well, good-bye, dear Lady Gwen. It is so wise of you to humour Lord William in the meantime, and the only way to choke him off marrying her. Of course, for your dear boy's sake, it is most undesirable that he should marry any one, isn't it? [*Exit.*]

LADY GWEN.

Good-bye, dear Miss Somerton. (*Stamps.*) Oh, you horrid, gossip-mongering, squalid pig!

SCENE VI.—*Same room.*

Enter MISS DALRYMPLE, *who walks up and down touching things affectionately.* *Enter* LORD WILLIAM.

MISS DALRYMPLE.

How nice it is to be back again! Here's William. How do you do, Lord William. (*LORD WILLIAM holds out his hand with his head turned away.*) Oh! I forgot. There was a stipulation that if I came back you were not to speak to nor look at me except in public, wasn't there?

[*LORD WILLIAM nods and prepares to go out.*]

MISS DALRYMPLE.

Oh! don't go. I shan't mind you. Couldn't you say "Yes" and "No"? That would commit neither of us to anything, would it?

[*LORD WILLIAM stands sideways and shakes his head.*]

MISS DALRYMPLE.

How tiresome you are! Perhaps you think you have said enough already?

[*Silence. MISS DALRYMPLE walks about and pulls out her gown, arranging lace, &c.*

MISS DALRYMPLE.

Oh, by-the-bye, do you think I ought to confess to Samuel? I couldn't make up my mind.

[LORD WILLIAM *turns away.*

MISS DALRYMPLE.

Well, you *are* a cheerful companion. Perhaps you have more to say to Miss Somerton. Well, go off to her.

[LORD WILLIAM *prepares to go.*

MISS DALRYMPLE *runs after him, lays hand on his arm, and drags him back.*

MISS DALRYMPLE.

No, don't! I don't wish you to go to her. She'll tell you all sorts of horrid things that aren't true again, and you'll believe them.

[LORD WILLIAM *shakes his head.*

MISS DALRYMPLE (*joyfully*).

You won't? (*In a loud voice*) I wish I had Sir George here. *He* would be nice to me.

[LORD WILLIAM *shakes her hand off angrily.*

MISS DALRYMPLE.

Sir George is so intelligent. *Is anything the matter?* Dear George—

[LORD WILLIAM *stamps and moves away.*

MISS DALRYMPLE.

You're not going, are you? You don't inconvenience me a bit—you're so unobtrusive. It is so nice never to be contradicted, and to say just what one likes. (*Silence. Stamps her foot.*) I wish you'd say something, even if it were unpleasant. I hate grumpy people. I do think (*pulling out handkerchief*) you might be kind to me when you know what trouble I am in. Lady Gwen. said I

might depend on your being nice to me—do you call this being nice?

[LORD WILLIAM *smiles and nods.*

MISS DALRYMPLE.

Oh, you do? By the way, I never gave you back your ring. I tied it round my neck to remember. (*Tries to untie ribbon.*) You might undo it for me. (*Holds up ribbon. LORD WILLIAM retreats and shakes head.*) Well, you *are* rude. Here it is. You can give it to Miss Somerton. (*Holds it out. LORD WILLIAM turns away.*) Won't you have it? You could have lovely studs made out of it, and you could think of me when you wore them. I suppose there could be no harm in thinking of me even if I *were* Lady Marchmont.

[LORD WILLIAM *turns sharp round angrily and stops.*

MISS DALRYMPLE.

Or Mrs Samuel. I don't think Samuel would mind. I am sure he wouldn't feel at all unkindly towards you. He doesn't thirst for people's blood a bit.

[*Tenders the ring again. LORD WILLIAM takes it and throws it to the other side of the room. Exit.*

MISS DALRYMPLE

(*waits till he is quite gone and looks for ring.*)

What waste, and what a naughty temper. (*Finds it and slips it on to ribbon again.*) I shall offer it him again presently.

Enter MISS SOMERTON.

MISS DALRYMPLE (*offering hand*).

Oh, how do you do, Miss Somerton?

[MISS SOMERTON *takes no notice.*

MISS DALRYMPLE

(*rather disconcerted*).

I did not know you were staying here.

MISS SOMERTON (*very coldly*).

The surprise is mutual. I never thought you would be—courageous enough to return *here*.

MISS DALRYMPLE (*cheerfully*).
Why not?

MISS SOMERTON.

I understand there are reasons why one would hardly expect to find you received here.

MISS DALRYMPLE.

Because I broke off my engagement to William?

MISS SOMERTON.

I suppose it is wiser to speak of it so.

MISS DALRYMPLE.

I should have thought you would have approved of my breaking off the engagement.

MISS SOMERTON.

I think all Lord William's friends must be glad that he has escaped.

MISS DALRYMPLE.

Escaped? Surely that is not a very kind way to put it.

MISS SOMERTON.

That is the way his friends put it, and that he puts it himself now that he sees more clearly—

MISS DALRYMPLE.

Oh, William says so, does he? Dear William prattles so artlessly.

[*Silence.*]

MISS DALRYMPLE.

I must go and examine William on this subject.

MISS SOMERTON.

I do not think you need trouble. Lady Gwen. asked me to look after him and amuse him this afternoon.

MISS DALRYMPLE.

Let us go and look for him together.

[*MISS SOMERTON stares at her coldly from head to foot, moves away. MISS DALRYMPLE follows.*]

MISS DALRYMPLE

(*stagily with gesture*).

Lead on—I follow to the death!

[*Exeunt.*]

LADY GWEN. and MISS SOMERTON
sitting at one side of the room,
MISS DALRYMPLE *alone at the other.*

LADY GWEN.

(*rising and going across*).

I must not let dear Susan sit by herself over there. Come over to us, dear.

MISS DALRYMPLE (*rather bitterly*).

Thank you, dear Gwen.; but I am not good enough for that lady. I come off black if I go nearer.

LADY GWEN.

What nonsense!

MISS DALRYMPLE.

Her purity is so spotless! She cannot touch me with the hem of her garment for fear that her virtue should take to itself wings and disappear. It must be dreadful to have so precarious a grasp of it, mustn't it, Gwen.?

LADY GWEN.

What nonsense! (*Bending down*) Why, Susan dearest, you aren't going to let Blanche get the better of you, are you?

MISS DALRYMPLE.

Yes, dear, I think so.

[*In depressed tone.*]

LADY GWEN.

Why, where's your courage?

MISS DALRYMPLE.

I never had any. I was born a coward, thank goodness.

LADY GWEN.

Aren't you going to fight for me? Come, come, brisk up! Courage!

[*Goes back across the room. MISS DALRYMPLE follows, and sits beside MISS SOMERTON.*]

MISS SOMERTON

(*rising and going to window*).

What a lovely moonlight night! Shall we go out? Do come, it looks exquisite. You don't mind, Lady Gwen.?

[*Steps out of French window.*]

LADY GWEN.

I should prefer it.

[*Exit* MISS SOMERTON. MISS DALRYMPLE *hastily turns her back to* LADY GWEN. *and stamps angrily.*

MISS DALRYMPLE.

Well, dear, that wasn't much of a success. (*Cheerfully*) We must try again.

LADY GWEN. (*angrily*).

She shall either apologise or she shall leave my house. I will go to her, and you may be sure I shall say what I mean.

Enter LORD WILLIAM, *stands, hesitates, goes across to* MISS DALRYMPLE.

LORD WILLIAM.

Are you afraid to go out too, Miss Dalrymple?

MISS DALRYMPLE.

Very much; the atmosphere is too chilly.

LORD WILLIAM.

It's really quite warm, but I'll fetch you a wrap. [*Turns to go.*

MISS DALRYMPLE

(*rises and goes across the room*).

You need not. I was alluding to the mental atmosphere.

LORD WILLIAM.

What has Blanche——

MISS DALRYMPLE.

Miss Somerton's efforts have been crowned with success. I said the atmosphere was chilly. I made a mistake. She is making this house too hot to hold me.

LORD WILLIAM.

Has Gwen.——

MISS DALRYMPLE.

Gwen. has been in every way most kind.

LORD WILLIAM.

Have I failed in respect?

[*Follows her and stands behind her.*
VOL. CLXX.—NO. MXXXIII.

MISS DALRYMPLE (*shakes her head*).

In no way; but your guests are not so punctilious.

LORD WILLIAM.

In what way?

MISS DALRYMPLE.

Oh, they behave towards me as the smartly improper ought to behave to a suspected offender, though Miss Somerton is good enough to say that if a girl is in a good set it is really almost as respectable for her to run away before her marriage as after.

LORD WILLIAM.

Confound her impudence!

MISS DALRYMPLE.

You see her friends solve the difficulty by not running away at all. Everything comes in time to her who has a detachable husband. (*Laughing a little.*) Well, well—it is a queer world, my dear William—(*throws herself on chair*)—it is only the truly virtuous like you and me who are thoroughly uncomfortable.

LORD WILLIAM (*sitting on arm of chair*).

I am not in the least uncomfortable, thank you.

MISS DALRYMPLE (*laughing a little*).

Perhaps you are not truly virtuous.

LORD WILLIAM.

Tell me what I can do. (*Walks up and down the room.*) Do you suppose I do not reproach myself? If it had not been for my beastly tomfoolery——

MISS DALRYMPLE (*turning with a frown*).

No, do not blame yourself. I should have been more careful, but I was so dull, . . . and I thought Samuel made it all right. . . . Perhaps I may mention now that I have a brother Samuel. (*Laughs.*) It's a horrid name, isn't it? I couldn't marry any one of the name.

LORD WILLIAM.

Susan! (*Comes quickly across and bends over her.*) Were you all the

time talking what young beasts call
tommy-rot?

MISS DALRYMPLE.

I'm sorry.

LORD WILLIAM.

Can you forgive me for putting you
in a hole?

MISS DALRYMPLE.

I forgave it long ago.

LORD WILLIAM.

You darling! You might go a
little further.

MISS DALRYMPLE.

I've gone a little further.

LORD WILLIAM.

Have you? How—how—far have
you gone?

MISS DALRYMPLE.

Miss Somerton will tell you.

*[Looks up and begins to laugh
a little.]*

LORD WILLIAM.

Could you go a little further still?

MISS DALRYMPLE.

How far do you want me to go?

LORD WILLIAM.

I want you to be my wife.

*[Takes her hand and raises her
from chair.]*

MISS DALRYMPLE.

You are infinitely good, but how
can I when your friends won't
receive me?

LORD WILLIAM.

Stuff and nonsense! Has Gwen.
not received you?

[Putting arm round her waist.]

MISS DALRYMPLE.

Yes.

LORD WILLIAM.

Well, she's the only relation that
matters. She's the only near one I've
got—except you.

MISS DALRYMPLE.

My dear William—except who?

LORD WILLIAM.

My wife. *(Stoops and kisses her
hair.)* You called me your dear
William.

MISS DALRYMPLE.

Oh, you are going far too quick!

LORD WILLIAM.

Not a bit.

MISS DALRYMPLE.

I can't marry you if people won't
speak to me.

*Re-enter LADY GWEN. MISS DAL-
RYMPLE starts away from LORD
WILLIAM.*

LADY GWEN.

Why did you not come out, Susan?
It was lovely.

LORD WILLIAM.

She was better employed.

*[Taking MISS DALRYMPLE'S hand
again.]*

Re-enter MISS SOMERTON.

MISS DALRYMPLE *(rather confused)*.

Oh, it was too cold—too hot—
too—

LORD WILLIAM.

The fact was I made her stay, and
hereafter Susan has got to do all I
tell her.

LADY GWEN.

(running up and embracing her).

Susan! Oh, you dear girl! Are
you going to marry him?

LORD WILLIAM

(turning to MISS SOMERTON).

I have to thank you for giving
Susan the turn in the right direction,
Miss Somerton. I believe it was
entirely owing to your influence that
she has stuck to her resolution to be
my wife.

[Takes MISS DALRYMPLE'S hand.]

MISS SOMERTON *frowns and
turns away.*

LADY GWEN.

It is delightful. Susan will be a
charming sister.

LORD WILLIAM.

We shall be a charming couple—
William and Susan, at your service!!

[Salutes.]

CURTAIN.

L. LOCKHART LANG.

THREE BIOGRAPHIES.

FEW more genuine and heart-felt pleasures fall to the lot of the hardened critic than that of welcoming a really promising recruit to the ranks of literature. Reviewers have, indeed, been known to lose their mental balance altogether in the ecstasy of "discovering" some new versifier, who has subsequently turned out to be considerably less than even a "minor" poet. But we trust that we shall not be thought guilty of extravagance when we offer our warm congratulations to the authors of the very workmanlike biographies which lie before us.¹ Mr Dickson, we understand, has already done sound work in the field of historical investigation, but this, unless we are mistaken, is to all intents and purposes his first *book*. Colonel Vetch and Mr Balfour also are novices, to the best of our belief. Each, no doubt, was peculiarly well qualified to deal with his special theme. Mr Dickson is Sir Robert Murdoch Smith's son-in-law, and what is perhaps the best, and is certainly the best-proportioned, biography in the language came from the pen of one who stood in the same relation to his subject; the connection of Colonel Vetch, in his own person and that of his father, with the corps of

Royal Engineers, to which Sir Gerald Graham belonged, extends over a period of ninety-five years; and Mr Graham Balfour can point, not merely to the tie of kinship, but also to constant association and close intimacy with Mr Stevenson during the latter years of his life, as a qualification for his office. It is pleasant to think that not one of the trio has proved unworthy of his opportunities, and to be able to award to all a substantial share of praise.

Mr Balfour's was, doubtless, the most difficult and delicate task. The details of Mr Stevenson's history were already to a great extent public property; but the "filling in" which is justly looked for in every full-dress biographical work is consequently the more concerned with matters of an intimate and domestic nature. Public expectation, again, had been sharpened by the announcement that a thoroughly practised and dexterous hand was to undertake the preparation of this official and authorised record. Mr Colvin himself, we believe, would be the first to admit that his substitute has acquitted himself of his duty with commendable taste and discretion. In the first place, he has done the

¹ The Life of Robert Louis Stevenson. By Graham Balfour. 2 vols. Methuen: 1901.

Life, Letters, and Diaries of Lieutenant-General Sir Gerald Graham, V.C. By Colonel R. H. Vetch, C.B. Blackwood: 1901.

The Life of Major-General Sir Robert Murdoch Smith, K.C.M.G. By W. K. Dickson. Blackwood: 1901.

necessary patchwork with neatness and care; and that much of what he had to do was patchwork is plain from a consideration of the mass of material, published and unpublished, which Mr Stevenson left behind him. In the second place, he has turned all the ticklish corners in his road with firmness and precision; and of such corners every biographer must needs have a full allowance.

But there is a third particular in regard to which Mr Balfour deserves especial credit. By a species of vicarious retribution, affectation and self-consciousness have consistently dogged almost all such as have written about the author of whose art and accomplishment affectation and self-consciousness were the fundamental principles. The reminiscences of his life and character put forth by persons who knew him by sight or sported with him in infancy, are, with scarcely a single exception, deplorable performances. The "common Stevensonian" almost invariably writes as though he belonged to some inner ring to which alone it has been given to enter the most secret place of the sanctuary, and adequately to appreciate the merits of the idol. Wistful references to the east winds of Edinburgh and

the quadrangle of its University at one end of the tale, and knowing allusions to obscure localities, with unpronounceable names, in the southern hemisphere at the other, form the orthodox framework of the compositions of such gentlemen. The stuffing consists of the most hackneyed passages from the master's writings, selected according to taste, but with due observance of the inviolable rule that the "windless stricture of frost" must be cited as an example of his incomparable style, and the "brindled hair" of a contemporary man of letters as an illustration of the playful way in which literary gents chaff one another in public. Over the whole piece there will be diffused an atmosphere of virtuous exclusiveness, of assured though not too aggressive superiority, such as used to distinguish the walk and conversation of *amateurs* of Mr Browning and Mr Meredith.¹ Now Mr Balfour, we are thankful to say, has contrived to write about his hero and cousin without falling into the strain of far-fetched eulogy. He does not regard him as a celebrity to be exploited, or as a prodigy whose end is to bring glory to the showman. He has eschewed the petty airs and graces of an esoteric disciple; he writes

¹ When Mr Stevenson set up house in Samoa, Mr — wrote to him: "Since Byron was in Greece, nothing has appealed to the ordinary literary man so much as that you should be living in the South Seas." Why this should appeal so strongly to the ordinary, or the extraordinary, literary man, you are not told; but you cannot help feeling that Mr — would have written to precisely the same effect had the victim of his fatuity pitched his tent at the North Pole or in the crater of Vesuvius. Those of our readers who cannot guess Mr —'s name "in once" (and the touch is unmistakable) will find it in vol. ii., and there at p. 105.

simply and straightforwardly from certain knowledge, and not out of foolishness or a vain imagination.

In one of those strings of paragraphs (*causeries* we believe they are called) which appear from time to time in the press, and in which the most familiar facts about standard authors are communicated with all the *éclat* of new discoveries, as, for example, that Sir Walter Scott was lame; while the most trivial circumstances in their lives form the text of endless comment, as, for example, that the Brontë family did their washing at home (wiser they than the priests of the Brontë cult who have been washing the dirty linen of that unhappy house for the last half century!)—in one of these ridiculous *causeries*, we say, we recently read that the childhood of Lord Byron was a period in his life which had not yet been sufficiently “thrashed out.” We waive the question of the propriety of “thrashing out” the childhood of anybody; but, if the process be a legitimate one, it was certainly carried out in the case of Mr Stevenson, and the arms which wielded the flail were his own. The operation was conducted by him with great address and charm. The ‘Child’s Garden of Verses’ is one of the most striking *tours de force* which he or any one else ever executed; and its author could

hardly fail to be interesting in recounting the story of his early years. Yet it may well be doubted whether the proportion of grain to chaff is really considerable when the amount of toil expended is taken into the reckoning. At the very most, the childhood depicted so minutely by himself¹ was but the quintessence of the lives led by the offspring of the average parent of the period in the rank of life and with the religious views of Thomas Stevenson. Louis, we know, learned “The Lord’s my Shepherd,” and “I to the hills,” besides, we dare say, “Ye gates lift up,” and “O, send Thy light forth and Thy truth,” and many another lyric from the same collection. But in every second household in Heriot Row, we venture to conjecture, those identical verses were being committed to memory,—for hymns, with their unreality of sentiment, and their profusion of pinchbeck imagery, had not yet wholly displaced the impressive, though often rugged, numbers of Rous’s metrical version of the Psalms. Where was the nursery in the ’Fifties and the early ’Sixties which was not presided over by a rigid Presbyterian, and in which the writings of a mysterious being called M’Cheyne were not as strongly in evidence of a Sunday as the ‘Pilgrim’s Progress’ itself? We are confident that Master Louis was occasionally carried by his

¹ It has always struck us as a remarkable omission that in describing the sleepless nights of his early years and “the terror that lieth in darkness,” Mr Stevenson makes no mention of the cry of “Caller Ou!” once so familiar at night in the residential parts of Edinburgh, and, when delivered with the true Newhaven howl, by far the most fearsome sound which an Edinburgh child lying awake in bed was likely to hear.

"Cummie" as a treat to hear the great Dr Candlish, or even pounded on his little legs out the Lothian Road to try the preaching of the justly respected Mr Wilson—if indeed the Barclay Church, that most incongruous of all ecclesiastical edifices, was then in existence. Nor are we able to perceive anything out of the ordinary in his juvenile attempts at literature. Every boy with the slightest turn for letters has scribbled epics after the manner of Pope's 'Iliad,' or romances in the manner of 'Marmion,' or tales in the manner of Mr Ballantyne, or has at least made believe to conduct a periodical, serious or comic. The one early effort of Mr Stevenson's which we would have given a good deal to see is a description of the inhabitants of Peebles in the style of the 'Book of Snobs,' written before he was thirteen. Our impression is that, though he never was at the pains to develop it, he possessed in an unusual degree a gift for the satirical presentation of character, which if he had chosen to exercise on a scale commensurate with the field which his country offers to such a talent, his reputation would have stood even higher than it does at the present moment.

About his school-days Mr Stevenson was less communicative than about the period preceding his exit from the nursery, and his biographer has not been able to add very much to what is already known. He has left no lasting tradition behind him at the Edinburgh Academy, though we have

heard a vague story that instead of spending his daily penny for luncheon he used to save it up, with a view to an expedition on Saturday to Leith, where the company of seafaring men was to be readily obtained. He spent only two years at that famous school, and we have it on good authority that in the printed school-list for 1862 his name appears among the "gytes" as Stevenson, Robert, while in the list for 1863 it is rendered as Stevenson, Lewis R. This is the sort of vital fact which will be greedily seized upon by those whose amusement it is to "thrash out" the lives of great men, and we are happy to make them a present of the information. It was certainly a strange freak, at the age of eighteen, to alter the spelling of his second name merely because he had taken a dislike to a prominent fellow-townsmen who employed the ordinary Scotch mode of spelling that, his own, patronymic. What Mr Stevenson would have done had his baptismal names chanced to be William Ewart, we scarcely like to think. With his sinking of the Balfour, which was his third name, we have much more sympathy. Had he prosecuted his forensic career with any success he would infallibly have "got" Mr "Balfour-Stevenson," one of those superfluous and meaningless double surnames which possess an unaccountable attraction for a considerable section of the Scots middle class. After leaving the Academy, he was

sent for a term to a boarding-school near London,—*not* Mr John Lyon's celebrated foundation at Harrow-on-the-Hill, but "Spring Grove," Isleworth,—and he subsequently finished his schooling at a small private seminary in Edinburgh. It is not a little curious, as illustrating the different views of life taken by different people, to reflect, that while Mr Thomas Stevenson, the well-to-do civil engineer, was thus providing his only child with an education which, except as regards the Academy, had no pretensions whatever to being first-rate, Mrs Oliphant had begun to work her fingers to the bone in order to be able to send her boys to Eton. Both parents, perhaps, might have found a *via media* which would have led to more satisfactory results, though Mrs Oliphant could have pleaded the authority of no less a person than David Hume for the estimation in which she held Henry's holy shade. Certain it is, we think, that had Mr Thomas Stevenson lived thirty years later he would have realised how all-important it is for a boy who has been at school in Scotland, and whose life is to be passed in his native land, to breathe for a few years the larger ether and serener air of Oxford or Cambridge.

This privilege Mr Stevenson was not destined to enjoy, though we believe that he would have drawn incalculable benefit from it. There is no use in mincing matters, and it is unquestionable that domestic training had conspired with a constitutional tendency

to develop self-consciousness in him to an alarming degree. To refer to his eccentricity in dress—reassumed, after a temporary suspension, when he was old enough to know better—is to adduce sufficient proof of the predominance in him of this fatal quality. We think none the worse of a young fellow for being a bit of a dandy: it indicates an abhorrence of those slovenly habits, those "dressing-gown-and-slipper tricks," which, if not sternly checked in youth, will assuredly obtain the mastery in middle age. But grossly to violate the ordinary conventions of dress, whether a sense of comfort or of artistic effect be made the excuse—still more to wear long hair and even *seem* to be the reverse of *soigné* in the matters which concern the adornment of the person—indicates a frame of mind which must seriously obstruct the operation of the better qualities that lie beneath. The truth is that Stevenson was not a Bohemian of the true breed. He was essentially the burgess masquerading as the Bohemian; and that was just the difference between him and his no less brilliant though less celebrated cousin, "Bob." How could it be otherwise, understanding his pedigree, into which even the ingenuity of antiquaries could not contrive to interpolate James Mohr? The velvet coat, the black shirt, all the other items of the panoply of eccentricity, were donned, whether in Princes Street or in Piccadilly, not as a matter of course and in the

ordinary nature of things, but for the sake of being odd; with an eye on the *digito monstrari*; and by way of protest and defiance to the world which went on its own way, not much concerning itself with youthful genius and its obtrusive manifestations.

Mr Balfour indeed says no more than what is strictly true when he tells us that "conventional persons and conventional entertainments never had any attraction for him, and from general society in Edinburgh he was not long in withdrawing himself" (i. 75). Neither the affection of the blood-relation nor the enthusiasm of the biographer suggests any valid justification for this unhappy line of policy. His delicacy of health did not become confirmed until some years after his passing at the bar, and might possibly have been aggravated less by the entertainments of private hospitality than by tavern-revels in the purlieus of the old town. One circumstance, it is true, Mr Balfour brings out very clearly, which might well cover a multitude of much more heinous offences than could ever have been laid to Mr Stevenson's charge. We had often wondered why he never joined a good club; why he seems to have absented himself from the festive gatherings of his contemporaries; and why we never hear of him on the links at Musselburgh with the late Sir Walter Simpson—as good a fellow and as true a friend as ever breathed. The reason is now as plain as

possible. From the time of his reaching manhood almost up to the time of his passing advocate, the allowance which his father made him, and on which he was dependent for his *menus plaisirs* (we scarcely suppose that he had to dress upon it), was at the rate of half-a-crown, or, at the very most, five shillings, a-week! No wonder that he was driven to seek recreation in places where an extensive and peculiar knowledge of low life might indeed be easily acquired, but which had little else to recommend them. But for the latent strain in him of the "Shorter Catechist" (and Mr Henley's sonnet seems to us incomparably the best summary of the man that we shall ever get), his father's singular error of judgment might well have carried in its train his mental and moral ruin.

Mistaken as was the theory that a young man of high spirits and generous instincts was to be kept in the way he should go by restricting him to an allowance of pocket-money at which, we suppose, many a sixth-form boy would turn up his nose, it must not be forgotten that Mr Stevenson had within his reach pleasures, the attainment of which would have cost him nothing save a little trouble. Young men are not to suppose that they have only to open their hands for invitations to be thrust into them. But a very moderate amount of exertion on the part of a man of Mr Stevenson's gifts might have made it certain that he would never have

wanted for the best company that the town had to afford. The age of giants, it is true, was departed. Wilson, Jeffrey, Cockburn, and Hamilton passed away early in the decade which coincides with Mr Stevenson's childhood. But a sufficient number of distinguished men remained—many of them ornaments of the profession which he selected for his own—who were deeply imbued with the best traditions of the past, who were probably not less able and witty than even the most brilliant members of the Savile Club, and whose acquaintance it was an honour for any young man to possess. Of such survivals of an even greater generation let us endeavour to recall some of the names.

Aytoun had died before Mr Stevenson had finished his schooling; but of his friends there were left Mr George Moir, a man of innumerable accomplishments and exquisite taste, Mr John Skelton, the willing and trusty friend of all his juniors who were wise enough to take advice, and Mr John Blackwood, of whom we need say no more in the pages of this Magazine. Mr Sellar was the Professor of Humanity in the University, than whom a more refined and admirable scholar never occupied professorial chair. To Sir Alexander Grant, Principal in the same institution, we should have supposed that ready access was available through the medium of the amiable and brilliant James Walter Ferrier, the subject of one of Mr Stevenson's finest and most sincere prose

passages. Lord Neaves was still in the plenitude of his powers, though past the three-score years and ten, and his house was the centre of all that was most agreeable in the Scottish metropolis. On another side of Charlotte Square, Lord Ardmillan, one of the best and most single-minded of men, remained to support the Whig tradition with indomitable spirit and energy. In Lord Deas, again, Mr Stevenson would have found one whose gruffness of manner and speech, no less than his vigour of intellect, recalled the Scottish judges of an earlier and less polished age. Lord Moncreiff—the friend and colleague of Lord Palmerston, of Sir George Cornwall Lewis, and of Lord Clarendon—had played his part in high politics, and had ruled Scotland during the Whig domination almost as absolutely as Lord Melville had done under an older *régime*. Finally, in Lord Justice-General Inglis, Mr Stevenson would have recognised the greatest advocate who ever practised at the Scotch bar, and a judge whom Lord President Blair, had he been spared, might have equalled, but whom no one could have surpassed.

Such were some of the personages whose doors might have flown open to receive the promising young author and advocate, had he but taken the pains to master the very simple secret of the “open sesame.” He preferred another course, and, with the exception of Fleeming Jenkins, of Mr Edmund Baxter, whose

good - nature and kindliness were quite exceptional, and of Mr Robert Hunter, a man of great abilities and solid worth, scarcely a single member of general society in Edinburgh older than himself is mentioned whose favourable notice Mr Stevenson sought to attract, or whose house he condescended to frequent. He had been far better occupied in dining at the hospitable tables of those whom we have named, or of his father's friends, than in concocting the practical jokes of which Mr Balfour gives us a specimen or two. Absolutely harmless in themselves, these pranks, we confess, make very dreary reading, and we cannot help thinking that Mr Stevenson and his friends possessed in a remarkable degree the quality for which the intimates of Mr Peter Magnus will ever be remembered. That he came to see the error he had committed in turning his back on such men of the world and of affairs as were accessible to him, he nowhere explicitly admits, though we make bold to say that we consider it quite probable. He was far too wise and clear-headed to cherish many delusions about himself; and he must have realised that the gospel of life according to Robert Fergusson had completely failed to impart that

robustness and reality to his work of which it stands so manifestly in need. The philosophy contained in Scott's letters to his eldest son, the Cornet, may not set forth the whole duty of man; but it provides an everyday working code, a *carte du pays* of life, which is not likely to lead any one far astray. We always suspect the uneasy consciousness that his point of view in such matters was the wrong one and Scott's the right, to be accountable for the astounding and otherwise inexplicable harshness of Mr Stevenson's judgment upon Lockhart — a man whose character he that presumes seriously to attack must indeed be fortified by the triple brass of an inordinate conceit of himself.

That Mr Stevenson would have been a success at the bar had he seriously applied himself to that profession, we do not for one moment imagine. Apart altogether from the uncongeniality of the employment and the necessity of unremitting application (the £6 which he earned by his writings in Messrs Skene & Peacock's office is a miserable result to show for a couple of years' work), his constitution would in all probability never have sustained the stress of work which must be undergone by an advocate in anything like a good practice.¹ His

¹ Mr Balfour tells a story, new to us, of how Mr Stevenson was nonplussed by a judge who maliciously desired to enter into the merits of a cause which counsel had been instructed merely to "waken" (Mr Balfour will please note, not "revive"). Whether *propter hoc* or not, we cannot tell; but it is certain that on one occasion, having been instructed to move for "intimation and service" (the simplest of an advocate's duties), he took fright, and delegated the task to Mr John Rankine, now Professor of Scots Law in the University of Edinburgh.

health may be said to have finally broken down in 1879. Thenceforth, he himself writes to Mr Meredith, in 1893, he had not a day's real health: "I have wakened sick and gone to bed weary, and I have done my work unflinchingly. I have written in bed," he adds, "and written out of it, written in hemorrhages, written in sickness, written torn by coughing, written when my head swam for weakness, and for so long, it seems to me, I have won my wager and recovered my glove." The boast is assuredly not unjustified. He finally left his native country in 1888 to cruise among the islands of the South Seas, and settled in Samoa, where he enjoyed comparative vigour, and where his life was, upon the whole, a peaceful and happy one. That the blight of his malady to some extent broods over all his later books is, we think, incontestable. But probably the great crook in his lot was the fact that, no matter what labour he expended on what he essayed (and of sheer recasting and polishing no one could have been more prodigal), he never had the feeling that the thing had "come twangingly off." If there be any exception, it is the 'Weir of Hermiston' fragment; and 'Weir of Hermiston,' when all is said and done, is but a brilliant anachronism.

His essay on Burns—one of the most seasonable and courageous contributions ever made to the literature of criticism—stands on record as a proof of his independence of judgment and his indifference to popular clamour. Is it possible, then, to doubt that he had a depressing sense of his own limitations and his own comparative futility? It was only to be expected that he should score his first success with the great reading public by means of a work which is neither a very good fairy tale nor a very original allegory. The striking episodes with which the Bible abounds having long been out of fashion, what more natural than that a race of preachers, whose hearts, it is devoutly to be hoped, are superior to their heads, should pounce with glee upon Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde? And the pulpit is still one of the most expeditious short-cuts to popularity. Of the experiments he made in the romance of adventure, few will probably dispute that 'Kidnapped' is the best.¹ Yet to mention the poorest of Scott's romances, written prior to 1827, in the same breath with that ingenious and well-contrived story, is to subject the latter to too high a test. Mr Stevenson never throws off the air of make-believe and unreality; nor would we barter Edward Waverley, or Henry Morton,

¹ We have always thought that one of his happiest inspirations was the English soldier in 'Kidnapped' with his "I tell you it's 'ot" (Ed. 1886, p. 197). This is the sort of stroke that must be almost as satisfying to its author as the invention of the steam-engine to James Watt. And yet, like all great discoveries, how simple and obvious when once made!

or even Frank Osbaldistone (and nowadays any intelligent young man can tell you what poor worms these heroes be; aye, and appeal to Sir Walter's own testimony to bear them out), for a baker's dozen of David Balfours. Mr Stevenson's true strength lay in the limited region where, in order to ensure complete triumph, artifice must not only be exquisite but also palpable; in those fantastic realms in which the *récherché* epithet and the unexpected turn of phrase are indispensable conditions of "playing the game." And accordingly his really material contributions to creative literature—if such it can be called—are to be found in 'The New Arabian Nights,' in 'Prince Otto,' and in some of the earlier tales, such as "The Pavilion on the Links," whose very title should suffice to keep it sweet. When we add to these "Virginibus Puerisque" and certain of the "Memories and Portraits," we have practically exhausted the tale of his best and most characteristic work.

Mr Stevenson's influence has, no question, been among the most powerful stimulants which have acted upon the younger men of letters during the last fifteen or sixteen years. We doubt whether, upon a just balance, that influence has been for good. That the somewhat haphazard and slipslop manner which was too apt to satisfy Mr Trollope's artistic ideals should be abandoned, is well. That a writer should be unable to tell a plain story in a plain way is not so well. Mr Steven-

son himself played the "sedulous ape" to the end of the chapter, and the performance was always clever and often charming. But the sedulous ape of a sedulous ape is merely fatiguing. It was right for him to spare no pains in turning out the very best work of which he was capable; and it was natural for him to lay aside the works of Mr Carlyle, whose mannerisms are apt to be catching. Yet when we find him apparently apprehensive of being contaminated by the Patavinity of Livy (ii. 101), we can only wonder to what greater lengths the force of over-refinement and euphuism can go. In the sphere of criticism, once more, Mr Stevenson said much that is well worth saying, and said it with felicity and point. Yet we can never forget that he set agoing the common cant about Scott's "slovenliness." "Ill-written, ragged book"; "shambling sentences"; "ungrammatical and undramatic rigmarole"; "languid inarticulate twaddle": such are a few of the expressions which, within the compass of a page or two, he thinks fit to apply to Sir Walter's writing. And it is all nonsense at bottom, as none can have known better than he. "The virago lopped the genealogical tree, by demanding haughtily, 'If a stream of rushing water acknowledged any relation with the portion withdrawn from it for the mean domestic uses of those who dwelt on its banks?'" Translate this passage into the true Stevensonian dialect; and does any one pretend to suppose that 'Rob Roy' would be appreciably

the better for the process? The Waverley novels reproduced in the lingo of Mr Stevenson's imitators, who alternately rebuke and patronise the great Magician, would be almost as quaint and instructive a phenomenon as Mrs Todgers's idea of a wooden leg.¹ The true Stevenson, from a literary point of view, is not the Stevenson who wrote in his private diary—his diary!—that "when we sit late on deck, the trade-wind still chariots overhead an endless company of attenuated clouds" (ii. 44). Nor is it the Stevenson of the Vailima prayers, which all have the note of "the-finest-prayer-ever-delivered-to-a Boston audience." "The day returns and brings us the petty round of irritating concerns and duties. Help us to play the man, help us to perform them with laughter and kind faces, let cheerfulness abound with industry," &c. This from the man who in his youth had sat under Dr William Muir of St Stephen's, a divine "mighty in the Scriptures," a repository of the floating liturgy of the Church of Scotland! No: the true Stevenson is he shadowed forth in the valedictory address to the Speculative Society; the master of a unique vein of ironical humour; the only begetter of Prince Florizel; the lad that, walking out to Swanston one evening, fell in with a pitman who told him curious stories of body-

snatching, "and spoke with the exaggerated horror that I have always observed in common people of *this very excusable misdemeanour*" (i. 109).

The lives of Gerald Graham and Robert Murdoch Smith afford a striking reminder of the vast complexity of British interests. The two men were practically contemporaries, Graham having been born in 1831 and Smith in 1835. They entered the same branch of her Majesty's service within a couple of years of one another. Yet no two careers could have been more dissimilar. Active service in the Crimea (where he won the Victoria Cross in the attack on the Redan), in China, and in Egypt, sums up Graham's; while Smith's is a record of excavations in Asia Minor and in Africa, of the construction and superintendence of telegraphs in Persia, and finally of the control of a museum of science and art in his native land. We should be inclined to doubt whether any other nation in the world could produce a similar instance of such diversity of occupation under the guise of identity of profession; and their case, it need scarcely be said, is so far from being unique that it is absolutely typical of a thousand others. The great link between the two men, besides that of their common uniform, is their

¹ That Scott knew the trick of the *mot propre* as well as another is testified by many passages in the novels, but by none more than the concluding sentence of the penultimate paragraph of 'Woodstock,' which describes the death of Sir Henry Lee. Had Mr Stevenson hit upon that "exhilarating flash" he might well have deemed himself a happy man.

devotion to duty, and their indefatigable and single-hearted zeal in the cause of their Queen and country. Those qualities, to be sure, are not so rare as to call for special notice; but when they are combined with many other excellences of character and of intellect, it is well that they should be commemorated from time to time in the pages of a biography.

Sir Gerald Graham was reputed in his day to be the bravest officer in the British army. In the emphatic language of his old friend Lord Wolseley, he had "the heart of a lion and the modesty of a young girl." Yet this was the man who, writing from before Sebastopol, pronounced war to be "the most disagreeable employment in the world," apart from its excitement. His character, as here presented, reminds one not a little of Colonel Newcome, and the analogy is strengthened by the unlucky invasion of the City which in later life made Graham a poor man. The details of the episode are the familiar ones,—the hope of great and sudden riches—the utter inexperience of business—the refusal to "get out" at the top of the market—the chivalrous clinging to a tottering concern—the final collapse and liquidation. Yet in spite of misfortune Graham's closing years were not unhappy. He retained those tastes which, almost as much as the passion for whist or bridge, lay the best foundation for a serene old age: a keen interest in affairs and men, and a genuine affec-

tion for literature in all its branches. Golf, too, which he took up as Cato took up Greek, provided him with a salubrious and fascinating pastime. Yet he should have abstained from using "link" in the singular as a synonym for links (p. 350). Who ever heard of a "stable-mew"?

His letters to his family from the Crimea tell us nothing new about the war; but they form an admirable record of the work, feelings, and opinions of our army. He is not slow to give expression to the profound dissatisfaction with Lord Raglan which had become predominant before the end of 1854. "The great incubus," he calls him; "the impersonation of *vis inertiae* of the British army." "You in England," he writes, "must now be beginning to become aware, despite enthusiastic 'correspondents,' that Lord Raglan is not the man you took him for—neither a great tactician nor a good general. St Arnaud adroitly presented his only good point when he praised Lord Raglan's personal indifference to danger. However, whether or not he has shown the 'courage of an ancient hero,' he has certainly not displayed the resources of a modern general" (p. 53). Lord Raglan, unfortunately, did not survive the campaign, to come home and vindicate his generalship in a post-prandial speech.

In his literary judgments Sir Gerald again calls Colonel Newcome to our memories. He stuck loyally to the loves of his youth, and for him Charles Kingsley never lost his

savour. It is curious to note how poorly he thought of the "Charge of the Light Brigade" when that poem first reached him in the trenches. We seem to miss in his criticisms that note of an independent and commanding mind which was so marked a characteristic of Edward Hamley. His intellectual qualities were not of the first order; yet his instincts were sound, and his views on most topics were those which become an honest man and an English gentleman. He much preferred the Authorised to the Revised Version of the Holy Scriptures (as who that is not a pedant does not?); and he was "dead against" female suffrage.

Graham possessed a fine vein of humour, as the following description of a dinner-party at Sir Archibald Alison's house near Glasgow, where he met Bulwer - Lytton, abundantly testifies:—

"The great event of the week here has been the installation of Bulwer as Lord Rector of the University. I was not present at that ceremony, where he made a splendid speech, or at the dinner given by the civic powers on Friday. I have, however, seen the lion more closely than I should have done on those public occasions. Whilst here he stopped at Possil House, the residence of Sir Archibald Alison, and on the day of the dinner (Friday) I was asked to dine at Possil House. Of course the host and his guest were at the civic dinner, so that I found quite a ladies' party. Another officer, and a son of Sir Archibald (who has been in the Crimea), and myself were the only representatives of the lords of creation. . . . Young Alison is a remarkably nice, intelligent young fellow. He served in the Highland Brigade

in the Crimea, and we had many notes to compare together. In the evening a literary lady and I talked about German literature. She produced a collection of autographs, containing among others a letter from Carlyle. The subject of his letter is tobacco, and he confines himself strictly to it, requesting his friend to send him some 'shag.' Indeed, except for a few characteristic Germanisms, it is about as uninteresting as those of Dr Johnson when he writes for a box of pills and a dose of salts. Of the different cliques of society here, Lady Alison's is considered about the first, and the literary lady is the only one to be found in it who also mixes in the town society. Thus I found my friend B. knew her, though he knew no one else of the party. He was not there, you know. As a married man he is chained to the bottom of his well, and cannot go climbing up the pole for sweetmeats as I and others (bears, bores, or beaux) do. May he at least find truth and happiness there as others similarly situated! But how about Bulwer? you are impatiently asking. Wait a little, as *we* did, and you will read. About half-past ten o'clock in came two gentlemen. One of them I recognised at once, by his shaking hands with me, as Sir Archibald Alison. He is a man of striking appearance, massive nose, high forehead, and dignified, kind expression. He speaks with a broad Scotch accent which I like. His companion was a big, red-faced man. No Bulwer here, it seems. Presently, however, enters by a back-door a tall thin man, whom I recognised for the great novelist (the author of the 'Caxtons'), and made way for accordingly. His eyes scarcely seemed to see me as he made his way towards the sofa. His appearance is certainly remarkable. You will remember how David Copperfield, after a very convivial party with his friend Steerforth, looks at himself in the glass and thinks that he is all right but that his *hair* is drunk. Well, Sir Edward's hair had precisely the same appearance. For the rest he has a high forehead, aquiline nose, and wears a moustache and imperial. He seemed to me terribly tired, fairly done up,

having very bad health. The literary lady rather bored him by reading Carlyle's letter to him (which is rather long for the subject). He is somewhat deaf, and she had to bawl it into his ear. He made no comment, but tried feebly to laugh. In answer to an inquiry from Lady Alison he replied, in a very melancholy tone, that he always burnt his letters and would have burnt that one. I heard nothing more from him, and as it was getting late we took our leave."

Perhaps the best story in the book relates to the visit of the Shah to Great Britain in 1889. At breakfast with the Persian Minister, Graham sat beside the Grand Vizier, Amir Sultan (in whom, if we mistake not, we recognise the Amin-es-Sultan of Mr Dickson's work). That statesman "drank champagne and was lively, making several Persian jokes, which were of course duly appreciated by the minor courtiers. He spoke a little French, and I asked him," says Graham, "which the Shah and he enjoyed most—the 'Empire' or the opera. Amir Sultan replied that the 'Empire' was the finer sight, but the opera the better music." Can diplomacy ever be brought to a higher pitch than that?

Robert Murdoch Smith came of that Scottish middling class for which the Union of the Parliaments has opened up so many avenues to fortune and renown, and which has supplied the British Empire with so

many admirable servants. He received his education—which was imparted, *more antiquo*, at the point of the tawse—at the Kilmarnock Academy,¹ whence he proceeded to Glasgow College. To the end of his life he was a firm believer in the Classics as being the best mental discipline for a boy; nor did he accept the humanitarian theories which would taboo judicious corporal punishment. He received his commission in the Engineers at the beginning of the Crimean war, but saw no service, and after peace had been declared was sent out in command of a detachment of sappers to join Mr (afterwards Sir Charles) Newton's archæological expedition to Budrum, the site of the ancient Halicarnassus.

We cannot follow in detail the account of the work there performed, but must refer our readers to the excellent series of letters, so fortunately recovered a few years ago, which Smith wrote to Sir John Burgoyne, through whose good offices he had obtained his appointment. Sir John is described by Sir Gerald Graham as "a nice, mild, quiet old gentleman," and, inasmuch as he had obtained his commission in the Engineers as far back as 1798, he was probably a great deal *too* old to be of much use in the Crimea. But clearly he had not lost the power of judg-

¹ It is interesting to learn that his master, Mr Harkness, had a horror of false quantities, which he did his best by forcible means to instil into his pupils. In the northern counties of Scotland, where the Classics have always held an honoured place in education, and where the Latin "version" is the very keystone of the arch, it is notorious that to this day the quantities are more than shaky.

ing character, for he could not have made a better selection for the post in Asia Minor. The life both at Budrum and afterwards at Cnidus, where a magnificent stone lion was the chief monument of antiquity unearthed, was dull and monotonous enough.

"If one were not busy," he writes, "the dreadful monotony of the life would soon kill one. You have no idea what a thing it is to be so completely out of the world with no one to speak to. I get up early in the morning, go about all day looking after the workmen, the diggings, &c., and in the cool of the evening before dinner take a ride for an hour or two. On Sundays I have a parade in the morning, after which church, at which, according to the rules of the service, I act as parson, by reading the Morning Service of the Church of England. I then generally ride away to some of the villages two or three hours from here, get some sort of lunch, a chat, and a smoke with the Turks, and ride back to our encampment in the evening. *Voilà ma vie!*"

The difficulty of procuring labour does not appear to have been very great, so long, at all events, as there was a supply of Turks. "The Turks continue very civil and obliging. The Greeks we have as little to do with as possible, as deceit and theft seem part of their very nature. They keep continually prowling about and stealing everything they can lay their hands on" (p. 34). And once more: "The Turks are very simple in their manners, but by no means unintellectual. Their behaviour is always dignified and gentlemanlike, forming a remarkable contrast to that of the Greeks" (p. 68). Sir Robert's story in

nowise differs from that of other travellers in the Levant. But all the *désagréments*—the want of company, and the labour of overcoming the not unnatural fear entertained by the inhabitants of a general subsidence of their dwellings—must have been atoned for when something specially interesting was brought to light. Smith's letters, indeed, bring home to the reader with peculiar force the fascination and romance of archæological exploration. Whether he himself received a due share of the reward for what was achieved, either in *kudos* or in a more substantial commodity, is a matter on which we are not to enter. He was never at any time addicted to the practice of grumbling, and if he had any feeling of the sort he wisely kept it to himself and to his family. Mr Dickson has an excellent and significant anecdote to tell in this connection:—

"On one occasion he was attending the levee of an exalted military personage. He arrived very late, and the great man greeted him wearily with the question, 'Well, and what's your grievance?' 'I haven't any grievance, sir,' was the reply. '*Thank God for that!*' piously ejaculated his Royal Highness."

But whatever the difficulties and discouragements which beset him in Asia Minor, and whatever the personal dangers which threatened him in the Cyrenaica, all these were as nothing to the obstacles which had to be encountered, when in 1865 he went to Persia in the first instance as superintendent of a portion in course of con-

struction, and afterwards as Director of the whole Persian section, of the Indo-European telegraph. That his work in this field was supremely successful is attributable to two causes. In the first place, he had the *suaviter in modo* combined with the *fortiter in re*. Had the post of Director, says Mr Dickson, "been filled by a man of the aggressive John Bull type, success would have been hopeless; but Murdoch Smith, besides being a thoroughly efficient telegraph officer, possessed in a rare degree the qualities which the position required—"tact, patience, a sympathetic understanding of Oriental character, and a singularly winning personality" (p. 229). Under his gentle but persistent pressure, difficulties, both political and practical, melted away, and the telegraph was established on a permanent footing, to the no small benefit of the people of Persia themselves as well as to the greater security and convenience of our Indian Empire.

The second reason why Smith succeeded where other men would have failed was that, instead of looking upon his appointment as a mere stepping-stone to a better and more agreeable office, he settled himself down in Persia as if he were to be there for the rest of his life. He made Teheran in the fullest sense his home, and, amidst official business of the most arduous kind, found time, as Mr Dickson tells us, "to work hard at the Persian language, to interest himself in Persian art, history, and social life, and to enjoy all that was

to be had in the way of sport and social amusement." He became the life and soul of the little European community of the Persian capital. Dinner-parties, private theatricals, picnics, balls—his was the moving spirit in all such diversions. "Teheran is quite unrecognisable," he writes, a few years after his establishment there. "Instead of grumbling, you hear nothing but 'How gay and jolly Teheran has become!' And people all know that they have the telegraph to thank for it." He paid a heavy penalty in his own health for enduring what many people would have considered an intolerable exile. There can be little doubt, we think, that the violent extremes of heat and cold, and the discomforts of putting up at the wretched post-houses, which he had to undergo in the course of his tours of inspection, helped to undermine his constitution and so to cut short his life. He paid a still heavier penalty in the series of bereavements which robbed him in relentless succession of a dearly-loved wife and of almost every member of a once large family. Yet for twenty years he stuck to his post, doing his country's work, and gaining for his country's benefit the goodwill and respect of all with whom he came into contact. It is to be wished that we had from his own pen a more complete record of his great achievement, a more detailed exposition of his knowledge of everything Persian, than can be gathered from the fugitive papers which he contributed to the transactions of

learned societies, or to the pages of encyclopædias. The best monument of the thoroughness with which he entered into the life of the East is probably to be found in the unrivalled collection of Persian pottery and other *objets d'art* which he made for the South Kensington Museum at a cost not exceeding one-tenth part of what they would now fetch if put upon the market.

He came to the Museum in Edinburgh in 1885, and thenceforward his life was one of comparative repose, though he did more than it is possible to tell here to organise and rearrange its valuable contents, to which justice had, perhaps, scarcely been done before his arrival on the scene. In 1887 he was sent on a mission to Persia in connection with the telegraph concession. Among the presents for the Persian magnates which he took with him were a complete set of specially manufactured instruments for a military band of sixty performers (such bands were a great weakness of the late Shah's); a magnificent dressing-case for the Shah's sister; a pair of rifles and a dressing-bag for the Shah's eldest son; and a carriage for the Minister of Public Works and Telegraphs. The mission was a complete success. Nasr-ed-Din was pleased to be extremely gracious; and the account of the presentation to his Majesty of the band instruments, reproduced by Mr Dickson from the columns of the 'Scotsman,' is very well worth reading. On that occasion the Shah in his turn presented Sir

Robert, as he was shortly to become, with a diamond snuff-box, having only a couple of years before singled him out for distinction by the gift of a sword, of which the hilt and scabbard were mounted in the finest *repoussé* gold. This was Sir Robert's last visit to Persia. He continued to reside in Edinburgh, occupying a prominent place in society, where there was no more welcome guest than he, but taking no active part in public life, though deeply interested in all that concerned the encouragement of a taste for art in his countrymen. He died on the 3rd of July 1900.

We like to think of Sir Robert Murdoch Smith as a typical Scotsman, and, but for two shortcomings (if shortcomings they be), we think we may venture to do so. He had no taste for metaphysics; and he set great store, both in theory and practice, upon good manners. Upon the first point we say nothing; upon the second, while we make bold to share his opinions, we know that there is against us, not only the weight of authority justly carried by the example of a whole people, but also the dictum of a "writer" (*Anglicè*, attorney) in a certain Scottish provincial town, to the effect that really strong men are always rude. The practical inference intended to be deduced from this remarkable maxim is evidently that you have only to be rude in order to be strong; and it is possible (though we cannot vouch for it) that its author is in the happy position of the man who, with regard to

another famous saw, felt himself in a position to corroborate its teaching as having himself "tried both." But we think that incitements to rudeness are somewhat superfluous in North Britain. They would be much more valuable in Persia, where, as Sir Robert tells us, the untruthful habits of the people are merely the result of an exaggerated politeness. For domestic consumption we should prefer Sir Robert's counsel, that boys should be taught not merely obedience, but civility, politeness, and deference to their elders and betters. "In the course of my public service" (such is his impressive testimony) "it has come within the scope of my personal observation that the sterling qualities of many a young Scotsman are obscured, and his chances in life heavily handicapped, by a certain dour gruffness of speech and manner which he has been foolishly brought up to regard as one of the minor virtues" (p. 343). Better sense was never spoken to the boys of the Kilmarnock Academy, or of any other school in Scotland.

A perusal of the three biographies which we have had under consideration raises the old question as to whether the life of the man of action or the man of letters be the preferable. As in most venerable controversies, there is very little difference in the views entertained by men of sense. We cannot all be men of action if we would. To each man is appointed his function, to each

man is allotted his "darg"; and happy is he who is enabled to fulfil the one and perform the other with the steadfastness and gallantry of a Stevenson, a Graham, or a Murdoch Smith. To have been able to "amuse hours of relaxation," or "relieve those of languor, pain, or anxiety," and by so doing "to have contributed, in however small a degree, to the happiness of his Majesty's subjects," is indeed a high privilege. It is only when we hear the clamour of authors for titles and a degree of consideration beyond what they merit as men, and when we catch the strident tones of those whose ambition it appears to be "to shout among the shouting crew," that we feel tempted unduly to depreciate the work of those whose destiny it is to blow the horn and not to draw the sword. The men of action and affairs may perhaps be excused if they have sometimes been apt to make light of a calling whose potentialities for mischief even in the world of affairs and action are so appalling. But no man of letters whose name is worth remembering has failed cheerfully to recognise his own comparative subordination in the scale of social usefulness, and the superior importance of those whose deeds it is his business to record, to whose need for instruction or amusement it is his pleasure to minister, and whose reputation must necessarily rest in a greater or less degree upon the success of his exertions.

THE WESTCOTES.¹

BY A. T. QUILLER-COUCH.

CHAPTER IV.—ENCOUNTER BETWEEN A HIGH HORSE
AND A HOBBY.

"YOUR chocolate will be getting cold, miss."

Dorothea, refreshed with sleep but still pleasantly tired, lay in bed watching Polly as she relaid and lit the fire in the massive Georgian grate. These occasions found the service in the town-house short-handed, and the girl (a cheerful body, with no airs) turned to and took her share in the extra work.

"Have they sent for Mudge?" (Mudge was the Bayfield butler.)

"Lord, no, miss: small chance of getting to Mudge, or of Mudge getting to us! Why, the snow is half-way up the front door!"

Bed was deliciously warm, and the air in the room nipping, as Dorothea found when she stretched out her hand for the cup.

"I always like waking in this room. It gives one a sort of betwixt-and-between feeling—between being at home and on a visit. To be snowed-up makes it quite an adventure."

"Pretty adventure for the gentry at the Dogs'! Tom Ryder, the dairyman there, managed to struggle across just now with the milk, and he says that a score of them couldn't get beds in the town

for love or money. The rest kept it up till four in the morning, and now they're sleeping in their fine dresses round the fire in the Orange Room."

Dorothea laughed. "They were caught like this just eighteen years ago—let me see—yes, just eighteen. I remember, because it was my second ball. But then there were no prisoners filling up the lodgings, so every one found a room."

"Some of the French gentlemen gave up their lodgings last night, and are down at the Dogs' now, keeping themselves warm. There's that old Admiral for one—I'm sure he never ought to be out of bed, with his rheumatics. It's enough to give him his death. Sam Zeally says that General Rochambeau is looking after him, as tender as a mother with a babby." Polly mimicked Sam's pronunciation, and laughed: she was Somerset-born herself, but had seen service in Bath.

"Where is Mr Endymion?"

"I heard him let himself in just as I was going upstairs after undressing you: that would be about one, or a quarter past. But he was up

¹ Copyright in the United States of America by H. F. Coates & Co., Philadelphia.

again at six, called for Mrs Morrish to heat his shaving-water, and had a cup of coffee in his room. He and Mr Narcissus have gone out to see the roll called, and get the volunteers and prisoners to clear the streets. Leastways that's what Mr Narcissus is doing: I heard Mr Endymion say something about riding off to see what the roads were like."

By this time the fire was lit and crackling. Polly loitered a while, arranging the cinders. She had given up asking with whom her mistress had danced; but Dorothea usually described the more striking gowns, and how this or that lady had worn her hair.

"Tired, miss?"

"Well, yes, Polly; a little, but not uncomfortably. I danced several times last night."

Polly pursed her mouth into an O; but her face was turned to the fire, and Dorothea did not see it.

"I hope, miss, you'll tell me about it later on. But Mrs Morrish is downstairs declaring that no hen will lay an egg in this weather, to have it snowed up the next moment. 'Not that I blame mun,' she says, 'for I wouldn't do it in their place,'"—here Polly giggled. "What to find for breakfast she don't know, and never will until I go and help her."

Polly departed, leaving her mistress cosy in bed, and strangely reluctant to rise and part company with her early waking thoughts.

Yes; Dorothea had danced

twice again with M. Raoul since her discovery of his boldness. He had seen her draw the orange curtain over his offence, and sought her again and apologised for it. He had done it (he had pleaded) on a sudden impulse—to be a reminder of one kind glance which had brightened his exile. No one but she was in the least likely to recognise the trinket: in any case he would paint it out at the first opportunity. And Dorothea had forgiven him. She herself had a great capacity for gratitude, and understood the feeling far too thoroughly to believe for an instant that M. Raoul could be mightily grateful for anything she had said or done. No: whatever the feeling which impels a young gentleman to secrete some little private reminder of its object, it is not gratitude; and Dorothea rejoiced inwardly that it was not. But what, then, was it? Some attraction of sympathy, no doubt. To find herself attractive in any way was a new experience and delightful. She had forgiven him on the spot. And afterwards they had danced twice together, and he had praised her dancing. Also he had said something about a pretty foot—but Frenchmen must always be complimenting.

A noise in the street interrupted her thoughts, and reminded her that she must not be dawdling longer in bed. She shut her teeth, made a leap for it, and, running to the window, peered over the

blind. Some score of the prisoners in a gang were clearing the pavement with shovels and brushes, laughing and chattering all the while, and breaking off to pelt each other with snowballs. She had discussed these poor fellows with M. Raoul last night. Could she not in some way add to their comfort, or their pleasure? He had dwelt most upon their mental weariness, especially on Sundays. Of material discomfort they never complained, but they dreaded Sundays worse than they dreaded cold weather. Any small distraction now——

The train of her recollections came to a sudden halt before a tall cheval-glass standing at an obtuse angle to the fireplace and on the edge of its broad hearth-rug. She had been moving aimlessly from the window to the wardrobe in which Polly had folded and laid away her last night's finery, and from the wardrobe back to a long sofa at the bed's foot. And now she found herself standing before the glass and holding her nightgown high enough to display a foot and ankle on which she had slipped an ash-coloured stocking and shoe. A tide of red flooded her neck and face.

But at breakfast she was reminded again of the French prisoners. Mrs Morrish had laid the meal in the ground-floor room, once a library, but now used as a bank-parlour—since the Westcotes, like so many lawyers and men of business in

those days of scarce money, had of late years opened a bank and issued their own notes. The good caretaker was in tears over the breakfast. "And I'm sure, miss, I don't know what's to be done, unless you can eat bacon."

"Which I can," Dorothea assured her.

"Well, miss, I am sure I envy you; for ever since that poor French Captain Fioupi hanged himself from Mary Odling's bacon-rack, two years ago the first of this very next month, I haven't been able to look at a bit."

"Poor gentleman! Why did he do it?"

"The Lord knows, miss: it's no use your coming to *me* for his reasons. But they said it was home-sickness."

From the street came the voices of Captain Fioupi's compatriots, merry at their work. Dorothea had scarcely begun breakfast before her brothers entered, and she had to arise and pour out tea for them. Narcissus took his seat at once. Endymion stood stamping his feet and warming his hands by the fire. He bent down, and with his finger flicked out a crust of snow from between his breeches and the tops of his riding-boots. It fell on the hearthstone and sputtered.

"The roads," he announced, "are not so very bad beyond the bridge. That is the worst spot, and I have sent down a gang to clear it. Our guests ought to be able to depart before noon, though I won't answer for the road Yeovil

way. One carrier—Allworthy—has come through to the bridge, but says he passed Solomon's van in a drift about four miles back, this side of the Cheriton oak. He reports Bayfield hill safe enough; but that I discovered for myself."

"It seems quite a treat for them!" Dorothea remarked.

His eyebrows went up. "The guests, do you mean?" He turned to the fire and picked up the tongs.

She laughed. "No; I mean the prisoners: I was listening to their voices. Just now they were throwing snowballs."

Endymion dropped the tongs with a clatter; picked them up, set them in place, and faced the room again with a flush which might have come from stooping over the fire.

"Come to breakfast, dear," said Dorothea, busy with the tea-urn. "I have a small plan I want your permission for, and your help. It's about the prisoners: General Rochembeau and M. Raoul——"

"Are doubtless prepared to teach me my business," snapped Endymion, who seemed in bad humour this morning.

"No—but listen, dear! They praise you warmly. For whom but my brother would these poor men have worked as they did upon the Orange Room, and all to show their gratitude? But it appears that the worst part of captivity is its tedium, and the way it depresses the mind. One sees that it must be so. They dread Sundays most of all. And I said I would speak to you, and if any way could be found——"

"My dear Dorothea,"—Endymion slipped his hands beneath his coat-tails and stood astraddle,—"I have not often to request you to mind your own affairs; but really when it comes to making a promise in my name——"

"Not a promise."

"May I ask if you seriously propose to familiarise Axcester with all the orgies of a Continental Sabbath? Already the prisoners spend Sunday in playing draughts, chess, cards, dominoes: practices which I connive at, only insisting that they are kept out of sight, but from which I endeavour to wean them—those at least who have a taste for music—by encouraging them to take part in our Church services."

"But I have heard you regret, dear, that only the least respectable fall in with this. The rest, being strict Roman Catholics, think it wrong."

"Are you quite sure last night did not overtire you? You are certainly disposed to be argumentative this morning."

"I think," suggested Narcissus, buttering his toast carefully, "you might at least hear what Dorothea has to say."

"Oh, certainly. Indeed, if she has been committing me to her projects, I have a right to know the worst."

"I haven't committed you. I only said I would ask your advice," poor Dorothea stammered. "And I have no project." She caught Narcissus' eye, and went on a little more firmly. "Only I thought, perhaps, that if you extended their walks a little on Sundays—they

are scrupulous in keeping their parole. And once in a way we might entertain them at Bayfield, late in the afternoon, when you have finished your Sunday nap. Narcissus might show them the pavement and tell them about Vespasian—not a regular lecture, it being Sunday, but an informal talk, with tea afterwards. And in the evening, perhaps, they might meet in the Orange Room for some sacred music. It need not be called a ‘concert’——” Dorothea stopped short, amazed at her own inventiveness.

“H’m! I envy your simplicity, my dear soul, in believing that the—ah—alleged *ennui* of these men can be cured by a talk about Vespasian. But when you go on to speak of sacred music I must be permitted to remind you that a concert is none the less a concert for being called by another name. We Britons do not usually allow names to disguise facts. A concert—call it even a ‘sacred’ concert—in the Orange Room, amid those distinctly—ah—pagan adornments! I can scarcely even term it the thin end of the wedge, so clearly can I see it paving the way for other questionable indulgences. I don’t doubt your good intentions, Dorothea, but you cannot, as a woman, be expected to understand how easily the best intentions may convert Axcester, with its French community, into a veritable hotbed of vice. And, by the bye, you might tell Morrish I shall want the horse again in half an hour’s time.”

Dorothea left the room on her errand. As she closed the door Narcissus looked up from his toast.

“Hotbed of fiddlesticks!” said he.

“I—ah—beg your pardon!” Endymion, in the act of seating himself at table, paused to stare.

“Hotbed of fiddlesticks!” repeated Narcissus. “You needn’t have snapped Dorothea’s head off. I thought her suggestions extremely sensible.”

“The concert, for instance?”

“Yes; you don’t make sacred music irreverent by calling it a concert. Moreover, I really don’t see why, as intelligent men, they should not find Vespasian interesting. His career in many respects resembled the Corsican’s.”

Endymion smiled at his plate. “Well, well—we will talk about it later on,” said he. He never quarrelled with Narcissus, whose foibles amused him, but for whose slow judgment he had a more than brotherly respect.

The Westcotes, though (at due intervals and with due notice given) they entertained as handsomely as the Lord Lieutenant himself, were not a household to be bounced (so to speak) into promiscuous or extemporised hospitality. For an ordinary dinner-party Dorothea would pen the invitations three weeks ahead, Endymion devote an hour to selecting his guests, and Narcissus spend a morning in the Bayfield cellar, which he supervised, and in which he took a just pride.

And so well was this inelasticity recognised—so clearly was it understood that by no circumstances could Endymion Westcote permit himself to be upset—that none of the snowed-up company at the Dogs' thought a bit the worse of him for having gone home and left them to their fate.

Dorothea, when at half-past ten she put on her bonnet and cloak and stepped down to visit them—the prisoners having by that time cleared the pavement—found herself surrounded by a crew humorously apologetic for their toilettes, profoundly envious of her better luck, but on excellent terms with one another, and—the younger ones, at any rate, who had borne the worst of the discomfort—enjoying the adventure thoroughly.

"But the life and soul of it all was that M. Raoul," confessed Lady Bateson's niece.

"By George!" echoed the schoolboy who had danced the "Soldier's Joy" with Dorothea, "I wouldn't have believed it of a Frenchy."

For some reason Dorothea was not too well pleased.

"But I do not see M. Raoul."

"Oh, he's down by the bridge helping the relief party. One would guess him worn out. He ran from lodging to lodging, turning the occupants out of their beds and routing about for fresh linen. They say he even carried old Mrs Keke-wich pick-a-back through the snow."

"And tucked her in bed," added the schoolboy. "And

then he came back—wet almost to the waist—and danced——"

He looked roguishly at Lady Bateson's niece, and the pair exploded in laughter.

They ran off as General Rochambeau—jaded and unshaven—approached and saluted Dorothea.

"Until Miss Westcote appeared we held our own against the face of day. Now, alas! the conspiracy can no longer be kept up."

"You had no compliment for me last night, General."

"Forgive me, mademoiselle." He lowered his voice and spoke earnestly. "I have a genuine one for you to-day—I compliment your heart. M. Raoul has told me of your interest in our poor compatriots—and that you intend——"

"I fear I can do little," Dorothea interrupted, mindful of her late encounter and (as she believed) defeat. "By all accounts M. Raoul appears to have made himself agreeable to all," she added.

The old gentleman chuckled and took snuff. "He loves an audience. At about four in the morning, when all the elders were in bed (pardon me, mademoiselle, if I claim to reckon myself among *les jeunes*—my poor back tells me at what cost)—at about four in the morning the young lady who has just left you spoke of a new dance she had seen performed this season at Bath. Well, it appears that M. Raoul had also seen it—a valtz they called it, or some such name. Whereupon nothing would do but

they must dance it together. Such a dance, mademoiselle! roll, roll—round and round—roll, roll—but *perpendicularly*, you understand. By-and-by the others began to copy them, and some one asked M. Raoul where he had found this accomplishment. ‘Oh, in my travels,’ says he, and points to one of the panels; and there—if you will believe me—the fellow had actually painted himself as Perseus in the Garden of the Hesperides——”

Poor Dorothea glanced towards the panel.

“Ah, you remember it! But he must have painted in the face after showing it to us the other day—or I should have recognised it at once. You

must come and see it; really an excellent portrait!”

He led her towards it. The orange curtain no longer hid the third nymph. But the blood which had left Dorothea’s face rushed back as she saw that the trinket had been roughly erased.

“It was quite a *coup*; but M. Raoul loves an audience.”

Shortly before noon the road by the bridge was reported to be clear. Carriages were announced, and the guests shook hands and were rolled away—the elder glum, their juniors in boisterous spirits. As each carriage passed the bridge, where M. Raoul stood among the workmen, handkerchiefs fluttered out, and he lifted his hat gaily in response.

CHAPTER V.—BEGINS WITH ANCIENT HISTORY AND ENDS WITH AN OLD STORY.

“*Ubique vicit Romanus habitat*—Where the Roman conquered, he settled; and it is from his settlements that to-day we deduce his conquests. Of Vespasian and his Second Legion the jejune page of Suetonius records neither where they landed nor at what limit their victorious eagles were stayed; yet will the patient investigator trace their footprints across many a familiar landscape of rural England, led by the blurred imperishable impress he has learned to recognise. The invading host sweeps forward, and is gone; but behind it the homestead arises and smiles upon the devastated fields; arms yield to the implements and ha-

biliments of peace; and the colonist, who supersedes the legionary, in time furnishes the sole evidence of his feverish and ensanguined transit . . .”

Narcissus was enjoying himself amazingly. His audience endured him because the experience was new, and the rattle of teacups in the adjoining library sustained while distracting them. Dorothea sat counting her guests and assuring herself that the number of teacups would suffice. She had heard the lecture many times before, and with repetition its sonorous sentences had lost hold upon her, although her brother had been at pains to model them upon Gibbon.

But the scene impressed her sharply, and she carried away a very lively picture of it. The old Roman villa had been built about a hollow square open to the sky; and this square now formed the great hall of Bayfield. Deep galleries of two storeys surrounded it, in place of the old colonnaded walk; out of these opened the principal rooms of the house, and above them, upon a circular lantern of clear glass, was arched a painted dome. Sheathed on the outside with green weather-tinted copper and surmounted by a gilt ball, this dome (which could be seen from the Axchester High Street, when winter stripped the Bayfield elms) gave the building something of the appearance of an observatory.

On the north side of the hall a broad staircase descended from the gallery to the tiled floor, in the midst of which a fountain played beneath a cupola supported by slender columns. On the west the recess beneath the gallery had been deepened to admit a truly ample fireplace, with a flat hearthstone and andirons. Here were screens and rich Turkey rugs, and here the Bayfield household ordinarily had the lamps set after dinner and gathered before the fire, talking little, enjoying the long pauses filled with the hiss of logs and the monotonous drip and trickle of water in the penimbra.

To-day the prisoners—two hundred in all—crowded the floor, the stairs, even the deep

gallery above; but on the south side, facing the staircase, two heavy curtains had been looped back from the *atrium*, and there a ray of wintry sunshine fell through the glass roof upon the famous Bayfield pavement and the figure of Narcissus gravely expounding it.

He had reached his peroration: and Dorothea, who knew every word of it by heart, was on the alert. At its close the audience held their breath for a second or two, and then—satisfied, as their hostess rose, that he had really come to an end—tendered its applause, and, breaking its promiscuous chatter, trooped towards the tea-room. Narcissus lingered, with bent head, oblivious, silently repeating the last well-worn sentences while he coned his beloved *tessellæ*.

A voice aroused him from his brown study: he looked up, to find the hall deserted and M. Raoul standing at his elbow.

"Will you remember your promise, monsieur, and allow me to examine a little more closely? Ah, but it is wonderful! That Pentheus! And the Mænad there carrying the torn limb!—also the border of vine-leaves and crossed thyrsi, though that, to be sure, is usual enough. And this next? Ah, I remember—'Tu cum parentis regna per arduum'—but what a devil of a design! And, above all, what mellowness! You will, I know, pardon the enthusiasm of one who comes from the Provence, a few miles out of Arles, and whose mother's

family claims to be descended from Roman colonists."

Narcissus beamed. "To you then, M. Raoul, after your forum and famous amphitheatre, our pavement must seem a poor trifle, though it by no means exhausts our list of interesting remains. The *præfurnium*, for instance. I must show you our *præfurnium*."

"The house would be remarkable anywhere—even in my own Provence—so closely has it kept the original lines. In half an hour one could reconstruct——"

"Ay?" chimed in the delighted Narcissus. "You shall try, M. Raoul, you shall try! I promise to catch you tripping."

"Yonder runs the Fosse Way, west by south. The villa stands about two hundred yards back from it, facing the south-east."

"A little east of south. The outer walls did not run exactly true with the enclosed quadrangle."

"You say that the front measured two hundred feet, perhaps a little over; clearly then it was a domain of much importance, and the granaries, mills, stables, slaves' dwellings would occupy much space about it—an acre and a-half at least."

"Portions of a brick foundation were unearthed no less than three hundred yards away. A hypocaust lay embedded among them, much broken but recognisable."

"What puzzles me," mused M. Raoul, "is how these southern settlers managed to endure the climate."

"But that is explicable." Narcissus was off now in full

cry. "The trees, my dear sir, the trees! I have not the slightest doubt that our Bay-field elms are the ragged survivors of an immense forest—a forest which covered the whole face of Somerset on this side of the fens, and through which Vespasian's road-makers literally hewed their way. Given these forests—which, by the way, extended over the greater part of England—we must infer a climate totally unlike ours of to-day; damper, perhaps, but milder. Within his belt of trees the colonist, secure from the prevailing winds, would plant a garden to rival your garden of the South—

"Primus vere rosam atque autumnocarpere poma."

"Yes," added M. Raoul, taking fire, "and perhaps a plant of helichryse or a rose-cutting from Pæstum, to twine about the house-pillars and comfort his exile."

"M. Raoul!" Dorothea's voice interrupted them. She stood by the looped curtain and reproached Narcissus with a look. "He has had no tea yet: it was cruel of you to detain him. My brother, sir," she turned to Raoul, "has no conscience when once set going on his hobby—for of course you were discussing the pavement?"

"We were talking, mademoiselle, at that moment, of the things which brighten and comfort exile."

She lowered her eyes, conscious of a blush, and half angry that it would not be restrained.

"And I was talking of tea,

if that happens to be one of them," she replied, forcing a laugh.

"Well, well," said Narcissus, "take M. Raoul away and give him his tea; but he must come with me afterwards, while there is light, and we will go over the site together. I must fetch my map."

He hurried across the hall.

"Come, M. Raoul," said Dorothea, stepping past her guest and leading the way, "by a small *détour* we can reach that end of the library which is least crowded."

He followed without lifting his eyes, apparently lost in thought. The *atrium* on this side opened on a corridor which crossed the front door and was closed with a door at either end, the one admitting to the service rooms, the other to the library. Flat columns relieved the blank wall of this passage, with monstrous copies of Raphael's cartoons filling the interspaces; on the other hand four tall windows, two on either side of the door, looked out upon the *porte cochère*, the avenue, and the rolling hills beyond Axcester. By one of these windows M. Raoul halted, and Dorothea halted too, slightly puzzled.

"Ah, mademoiselle, but there is one thing your brother forgets. What became of his happy colonists in the end? He told us that early in the fifth century the Emperor Honorius—was it not?—withdrew his legions, and wrote that Britain must henceforth look after itself. I listened for the end of the story, but your brother did not supply it. Yet

sooner or later one and the same dreadful fate must have overtaken all these pleasant scattered homes—sack and fire and slaughter—slaughter for all the men, for the women slavery and worse. Does one hear of any surviving? Out of this warm life into silence——" He paused and shivered. "Very likely they did not guess for a long while. Look, mademoiselle, at the Fosse Way stretching yonder across the hills; figure yourself a daughter of the old Roman homestead standing here and watching the little cloud of dust that meant the retreating column, the last of your protection. You would not guess what it meant—you, to whom each day has brought its restful round, who have lived only to be good and reflect the sunshine upon all near you. And I—your slave, suppose me, standing beside you—might guess as little."

He took a step and touched her hand. His face was still turned to the window.

"Time! time!" he went on in a low voice charged with passion. "It eats us all! Brr—how I hate it! How I hate the grave! There lies the sting, mademoiselle—the torture to be a captive: to feel one's best days slipping away and fate still denying to us poor devils the chance which even the luckiest—God knows—find little enough." He laughed, and to Dorothea the laugh sounded passing bitter. "You will not understand how a man feels—how even so unimportant a creature as I dares to bear a sort of personal grudge against his fate."

"I am trying to understand," said Dorothea gently.

"But this you can understand—how a prisoner loves the sunshine; not because, through his grating, it warms him, but just because it is the sunshine, and he sees it. Mademoiselle, I am not grateful: I see merely, and adore. Some day you shall pause by this window and see a cloud of dust on the Fosse Way—the last of us prisoners as they march us from Axcester to the place of our release: and seeing it, you shall close the book upon a chapter, but not without remembering——" He touched her hand again, but now his fingers closed on it, and he raised it to his lips,—"not without remembering how and when one Frenchman said, 'God bless you, Mademoiselle Dorothea!'"

Dorothea's eyes were wet when, a moment later, Narcissus came bustling through the *atrium* with a roll of papers in his hand. "Ah, this is luck!" he cried; "I was starting to search for you." He either assumed that they had visited the tea-room or forgot all about it; and M. Raoul's look implored Dorothea not to explain.

"Suppose we take the *tricladium* first, on the north side of the house. That, sir, will tell you whether I am right or wrong about the climate of those days. A summer parlour facing north, and with no trace of heating-flues! . . ."

He led off his captive, and Dorothea heard his expository tones gather volume beneath the dome of the great hall: then she turned the handle of

the library door and they were drowned by the babel within.

The guests took their departure a little before sunset. M. Raoul was not among the long train which shook hands with her and filed down the avenue at the heels of M. de Tocqueville and General Rochambeau. Twenty minutes later, while the servants were setting the hall in order, she heard her brother's voice beneath the window of her boudoir explaining the system on which the Romans warmed their houses.

She had picked up a religious book, but found herself unable to fix her attention upon it or even to sit still. Her hand still burned where M. Raoul's lips had touched it. She recalled Endymion's prophecy that these entertainments would throw the domestic mechanism—always more delicately poised on Sundays than on week-days—completely off its pivot. She had pledged herself to prevent this, and had made a private appeal to the maid-servants with whose Sunday-out they interfered. They had responded loyally. Still, this was the first experiment: she would go down to the hall again and make sure that the couches were in position, the cushions shaken up, the pot-plants replaced around the fountain so accurately that Endymion's nice eye for small comforts could detect no excuse for saying "I told you so."

As she passed along the gallery her eyes sought the pillars beside which M. Raoul had stood during the lecture. By the foot of it a book lay face downwards—a book cheaply bound between

boards of mottled paper. She picked it up and read the title. It was a volume of Rousseau's 'Confessions'—a book of which she remembered to have heard. On the fly-leaf was written the owner's name in full—Charles Marie Fabien de Raoul.

Dorothea hurried downstairs with it and past the servants tidying the hall. She looked to find M. Raoul still buttonholed and held captive by Narcissus at the eastern angle of the house. But before she reached the front-door she happened—though perhaps it was not quite accidental—to throw a glance through the window by which he had stood and talked with her, and saw him striding away down the avenue in the dusk.

She returned to her room and summoned Polly. "You know M. Raoul? He has left, forgetting this book, which belongs to him. Run down to the small gate, that's a good girl—you will overtake him easily, since he is walking round by the avenue—and return it, with my compliments."

Polly picked up her skirts and ran. A narrow path slanted down across the slope of the part to the nurseries—a sheltered corner in which the Bayfield gardener grew his more delicate evergreens—and here a small wicket-gate opened on the highroad.

The gate stood many feet above the road, which here descended the hill between steep hedges. She heard M. Raoul's footstep as she reached it, and, peering over, saw him before he caught sight of her. Indeed he had almost passed without looking up when she hailed him.

"Hullo?" He swung almost right about, and smiled up pleasantly. "Is it highway robbery? If so, I surrender."

Polly laughed, showing a fine set of teeth. "I'm most out of breath," she answered. "You've left your book behind, and my mistress sent it after you with her compliments." She held it above the gate.

He sprang up the bank towards her. "And a pretty book, too, to be found in your hands! You haven't been reading it, I hope."

"La, no. Is it wicked?"

"Much depends on where you happen to open it. Now if your sweetheart——"

"Who told you I had one?"

"Tut—tut—tut! What's his name?"

"Well, if you must know, I'm walking out with Corporal Zeally. But what are you doing to the book?" For M. Raoul had taken out a penknife and was slicing out page after page—in some places whole blocks of pages together.

"When I've finished, I'm going to ask you to take it back to your mistress; and then, no doubt, you'll be reading it on the sly. Here, I must sit down; suppose you let me perch myself on the top bar of the gate. Also, it would be kind of you to put up an arm and prevent my overbalancing."

"I shouldn't think of it."

"Oh, very well——" He climbed up, laid the book on his knee, and went on slicing. "I particularly want her to read M. Rousseau's reflections on the Pont du Gard; but I don't seem to have a book-marker,

unless you lend me a lock of your hair."

"Were you the gentleman she danced with at the Dogs' the night of the snowstorm?"

"The Pont du Gard, my dear, is a Roman antiquity, and has nothing to do with dancing. If, as I suppose, you refer to the Pont de Lodi, that is a totally different work of art."

"I'm sure I don't know what you mean."

"And I don't intend that you shall." He cut a small strip of braid from his coat, inserted it for a book-marker, and began to fold away the excised pages. "That's why I am keeping these back for my own perusal, and perhaps Corporal Zeally's."

"Do you know him?" She reached up to take the book he was holding out in his left hand, and the next instant his right arm was round her neck and he had kissed her full on the lips. "Oh, you wretch!" she cried, breaking free; and laughed, next moment, as he nearly toppled off the gate.

"Know him? Why, of course I do." M. Raoul was re-seating himself on his perch

when he happened to throw a look down into the road, and at once broke into immoderate laughter. "Talk of the wolf——"

Polly screamed and ran. Below, at a bend of the road, stood a stoutish figure in the uniform of the Axcester Volunteers—scarlet, with white facings. It was Corporal Zeally very slowly taking in the scene.

M. Raoul skipped off the gate and stepped briskly past him. "Good evening, Corporal! We're both of us a little behind time this evening," said he as he went by.

The Corporal pivoted on his heels and stared after him.

"Dang my living buttons!" he said reflectively. "Couldn' even wait till my back was turned, but must kiss the maid under my nose!" He paused and rubbed his chin. "Her looked like Polly and her zounded like Polly. . . . Dang this dimpsey old light; I've a good mind to run after 'n and ax'n who 'twas!" He took a step down the hill, but thought better of it. "No, I won't," he said; "I'll go and ax Polly."

CHAPTER VI.—FATE IN A LAURELLED POST-CHAISE.

All the tongues of Rumour agreed that the Bayfield entertainment had been a success, and Endymion Westcote received many congratulations upon it at the next meeting of magistrates.

"Nonsense, nonsense!" he protested lightly. "One must do something to make life more tolerable to the poor devils, and

'pon my word, 'twas worth it to see their gratitude. They behaved beautifully: you see, two-thirds of them are gentlemen, after a fashion; not perhaps quite in the sense in which *we* understand the word,—but then the—ah—modicum of French blood in my veins counteracts, I daresay, some little insular prejudices."

"My dear fellow, about such men as De Tocqueville and Rochambeau there can be no possible question."

"Ah—I'm extremely glad to hear you say so. I feared perhaps the way they managed their table-napkins——"

"Not at all. I was thinking rather of your bold attitude towards Sunday observance. What does Milliton say?"

Endymion's eyebrows went up. Mr Milliton was the vicar of Axcester, and the living lay in the Westcotes' gift. "I am not—ah—aware that I consulted Milliton. On such questions I recognise no responsibility save to my own conscience. He has not been complaining, I trust?"

"Not to my knowledge."

"Ah!" Endymion looked as if Mr Milliton had better not. "I take, you must know, a somewhat broad view on such matters—may I, without offence, term it a liberal one? As a matter of fact, I intend going yet further in the direction, and granting permission for a small *réunion* on Sunday evenings at the Dogs', when selections of purely sacred music will be performed. I shall, of course, deprecate the name 'concert'; and even 'performance' may seem to carry with it some—ah—suggestions of a theatrical nature. But, as Shakespeare says, 'What's in a name?' Perhaps you can suggest a more suitable one?"

"A broad-minded fellow" was the general verdict; and some admirers added that ideas which in weaker men might seem to lean towards free thought, and even towards

Jacobinism, became Mr Westcote handsomely enough. He knew how to carry them off, to wear them lightly as flourishes and ornaments of his robust common-sense, and might be trusted not to go too far. Endymion, who had an exquisite *flair* for the approval of his own class, soon learned to take an honest pride in his liberalism and to enjoy its discreet display. "The entertainment at Bayfield was nothing—a private experiment only: the unfamiliar must be handled gently: a good rule to try it on your own household before tackling the world. As a matter of fact, old Narcissus had enjoyed it. But if the neighbouring families were really curious, and would promise not to be shocked, they must come to the Dogs' some Sunday evening—no, not next Sunday, but in a week or two's time, when the prisoners, as intelligent fellows, would have grasped his notions." Sure enough, on the third Sunday he brought a round dozen of guests, and the entrance of the Bayfield party (punctually five minutes late), and their solemn taking of seats in the two front rows, thereafter became a feature of these entertainments. On the first occasion the musicians stopped, out of respect, in the middle of a motet of Scarlatt's; but Endymion gave orders that in future this was not to be. "I have been something of an amateur myself," he explained, "and know what is due to art."

It vexed Dorothea to note that after the first two or three performances some of her best friends among the

prisoners absented themselves — General Rochambeau, for instance. Indeed the General had taken to declining all invitations, and rarely appeared abroad. One March morning, meeting him in the High Street, she made bold to tax him with the change and ask his reasons.

The hour was eleven in the forenoon, the busiest of the day. In twenty minutes the London coach would be due with the mails; and this always brought the prisoners out into the street. The largest crowd gathered in front of the Dogs', waiting to see the horses changed and the bags unloaded; but a second hung around the post office, where the Commissary received and distributed the prisoners' letters, while lesser groups shifted and moved about at the tail of the butchers' carts and others laden with milk, eggs, and fresh vegetables from the country: for Axcester had now a daily market, and in the few minutes before the mail's arrival the salesmen drove their best trade.

General Rochambeau tapped his snuff-box meditatively, like a man in two minds. But he kept a sidelong eye upon Dorothea, as she turned to acknowledge a bow from the Vicomte de Tocqueville. The Vicomte with an air of amused contempt was choosing a steak for his dinner, using his gold-ferruled walking-stick to direct the butcher how to cut it out, while his servant stood ready with a plate.

"To tell you the truth, mademoiselle, I find a hand

at picquet with the Admiral less fatiguing for two old gentlemen than these public gaieties."

"In other words, you are nursing him. They tell me he has never been well since that night of the snowstorm."

"Your informants may now add that he is better: these few spring days have done wonders for his rheumatism, and indeed he is dressed and abroad this morning."

"Which explains why you are willing to stop and chat with me, instead of hurrying off to the post-office to ask for his letter—that letter which never comes."

"So M. Raoul has been telling you all about us?"

Dorothea blushed. "He happened to speak of it, at one of my working parties——"

"He has a fine gift for the pathetic, that young man; oh yes, and a pretty humour too! I can fancy what he makes of us—poor old Damon and Pythias—while he holds the skeins; with a smile for poor old Pythias's pigtail, and a tremor of the voice for the Emperor's *tabatière*, and a tear no doubt for the letter which never comes. M. Raoul is great with an audience."

"You do him injustice, General. An audience of half-a-dozen old women!"

General Rochambeau had an answer to this on his tongue, but repressed it. "Ah, here comes the Admiral!" he cried, as the gaunt old man came shuffling down the street towards them, with his stoop, his cross-grained features drawn awry with twinges of

rheumatism, his hands crossed above his tall cane. All Axcester laughed at his long blue surtout, his pigtail, and little round hat. But Dorothea always found him formidable, and wanted to run away. "Admiral, I was just about to tell Miss Westcote that the time is come to congratulate her. Here is winter past—except that of two years ago, the hardest known in Axcester; and, thanks to her subscription-lists and working parties, our countrymen have never gone so well fed and warmly clad."

"Which," growled the Admiral, "does not explain why no less than eight of them have broken their parole. An incredible, a shameful, number!"

"As time goes on, Admiral, they grow less patient. Hope deferred——"

Ta-ra, tara-ra! Ta-ra, tara-ra-ra! The notes of the guard's horn broke in upon Dorothea's excuse. Groups scattered, market-carts were hastily backed alongside the pavement, and down the mid-thoroughfare came the mail at a gallop, with crack of whip and rushing chime of bits and swingle-bars.

Dorothea watched the crowd closing round it as it drew up by the Dogs', and turned to note that the Admiral's face was pale and his eyes sought those of his old friend.

"Better leave it to me—to-day—if Miss Westcote will excuse me." General Rochambeau lifted his hat and hurried after the crowd.

Then Dorothea understood.

The old man beside her had lost courage to pick up his old habit: at the last moment his friend must go for the letter which never came. She cast about to say something: her last words had been of hope deferred—it would not do to take up her speech there. . . .

The Admiral seemed to meet her eyes with an effort. He put out a hand. "It is not good, mademoiselle, that a man should pity himself. Beware how you teach him that; beware how you listen to him then."

He turned from her abruptly and tottered away. Glancing aside, she met the Vicomte de Tocqueville's tired smile: he was using his cane to prod the butcher and recall his attention to the half-cut steak. But the butcher continued to stare down the street.

"Eh? But — dear me—it sounds like an *émeute*," said the Vicomte negligently, at the same time stepping to Dorothea's side.

The murmur of the crowd in front of the Dogs' had been swelling, and now broke into sharp, angry cries for a moment, then settled into a dull roar and rose in a hoarse crescendo. The mail-coach was evidently not the centre of disturbance, though Dorothea could see its driver waving his arms and gesticulating from the box. The noise came from ahead of it, some twenty yards lower down the hill, where the street had suddenly grown black with people pressing and swaying.

"There seems no danger here, whatever it is," said the Vi-

comte, glancing up at the house-front above.

"Please go and see what is the matter. I am safe enough," Dorothea assured him; "the folks in the house will give me shelter, if necessary."

The Vicomte lifted his hat. "I will return and report—promptly, if the affair be serious."

But it was not serious. The tumult died down, and Dorothea with her riding-switch was guarding the half-cut steak from a predatory dog when the Vicomte and the butcher returned together.

"Reassure yourself, Miss Westcote," said M. de Tocqueville. "There has been no bloodshed, though bloodshed was challenged. It appears that almost as the coach drew up there arrived from the westward a post-chaise conveying a young naval officer from Plymouth with despatches and (I regret to tell it) a flag. His Britannic Majesty has captured another of our frigates; and the high-spirited young gentleman was making the most of it in all innocence, and without an idea that his triumph could offend any one in Axcester. Unfortunately, on his way up the street, he waved the captured tricolor under the nose of your brother's *protégé*, M. Raoul——"

"M. Raoul?" Dorothea caught her breath on the name.

"And M. Raoul leapt into the chaise then and there, wrested the flag from him,—the more easily, no doubt, because he expected nothing so little,—and holding it aloft,

challenged him to mortal combat. Theatrically, and apart from the taste of it,—I report only from hearsay,—the *coup* must have been immensely successful. When I arrived, your brother was restoring peace, the young Briton holding out his hand, swearing he was sorry, *begad!* but how the deuce was he to have known?—and M. Raoul saving the situation, and still demanding blood with a face as long as an Alexandrine,—

'Ce drapeau glorieux auquel, en sanglotant

Se prosternent affaïsés vos membres, veterans !'

'Vary sorry, damitol, shake hands, beg your pardon'——" The Vicomte forgot his languor and burlesqued the scene with real talent.

Dorothea, however, was not amused. "You say my brother is at the Dogs', monsieur? I think I will go to him."

"You must allow me, then, to escort you."

"Oh, the street is quite safe. Your countrymen will not suspect *me* of insulting over their misfortunes."

"Nevertheless——" he insisted, and walked beside her. A mixed crowd of French and English still surrounded the chaise, to which a couple of post-boys were attaching the relay: the French no longer furious, now that an apology had been offered and the flag hidden, but silent and sulky yet; the English inclined to think the young lieutenant hardly served, not to say churlishly. Frenchmen might be thin-skinned; but war was war, and surely Britons had a

right to raise three cheers for a victory. Besides, he had begged pardon at once and offered to shake hands like a gentleman—that is, as soon as he discovered whose feelings were hurt; for naturally the fisticuffs had come first, and in these Master Raoul had taken as good as he brought. As the Vicomte cleared a path for her to the porch, where Endymion stood shaking hands and bidding adieu, Dorothea caught her first and last glimpse of this traveller, who—without knowing it, without seeing her face to remember it, or ever learning her name—was to deflect the slow current of her life and send it whirling down a strange channel, giddy, precipitous, to an end unguessed.

She saw a fresh-complexioned lad, somewhat flushed and red in the face, but of frank and pleasant features; dressed in a three-cornered cocked hat, blue coat piped with white and gilt-buttoned, white breeches and waistcoat and broad black sword-belt: a youngster of the sort that loves a scrimmage or a jest, but is better in a scrimmage than in a jest when the laugh goes against him. He was eyeing the chaise just now, and obviously cursing the hour in which he had decorated it with laurel. Yet on the whole in a trying situation he bore himself well.

“Ah, much obliged to you, Vicomte!” Endymion hailed the pair. “There has been a small misunderstanding, my

dear Dorothea—not the slightest cause for alarm. Still you had better pass through to the coffee-room and wait for me.”

Dorothea dismissed M. de Tocqueville with a bow, passed into the dark passage, and pushed open the coffee-room door.

Within sat a young man, his elbows on the table and his face bowed upon his arms. His fingers convulsively twisted a torn scrap of bunting; his shoulders heaved. It was M. Raoul.

Dorothea paused in the doorway and spoke his name. He did not look up.

She stepped towards him.

“M. Raoul!”

A sob shook him. She laid a hand gently on his bowed head, on the dark wave of hair above his strong shapely neck. She was full of pity, longing to comfort. . . .

“M. Raoul!”

He started, gazed up at her, and seized her hand. His eyes swam with tears, but behind the tears blazed a light which frightened her. Yet—oh, surely!—she could not mistake it.

“Dorothea!”

He held both her hands now. He was drawing her towards him. She could not speak. The room swam. Outside the window she heard the noise of starting hoofs, of wheels, of the English crowd hurraing as the chaise rolled away. Her head almost touched M. Raoul’s breast. Then she broke loose as her brother’s step sounded in the passage.

FRANCINA VAN RHEDE.

A LEGEND OF TRINCOMALEE.

TRINCOMALEE. The "Trinco" of our bluejackets. Tiruconā-mālei in the high-Tamil vernacular, the holy hill of Konātha. What does the name recall, and why do I love its memory? Let me try and explain. To begin with, it is very beautiful. Coming east from the breathless, feverous forests of Anuradhapura, from the *parangi*-stricken villages of the North Central Province, one spends the night in a bullock-cart, deep-bedded in clean rice-straw. "Mak - mak - mak," "petā," the weary cry of the bullock-driver as he twists the patient creatures' tails, fades into one's dreams, and one no longer hears the grinding of teeth and bovine sighs which are the dumb remonstrance. With the early dawn we top the last ridge of porphyritic crag and look down upon the harbour—a vast lake of heavenly green with one misty outlet to the Bay of Bengal. Far to the south a dim and hazy streak, like a fold of softest gauze, marks the line of breaking waves on the golden sands of Taman-kadua: on the bosom of the lake lie little feathered islands of red crag, the jungle growing down to the water's edge, except where some rock pinnacle or buttress thrusts it aside to add a gleam of richer colour and give solidity to the vision. Far away across the bay the lighthouse of Foul Point shows

rose-colour in the early morning light. Below us is the town, a town of slumbering peace, of tobacco-gardens, solid native houses whitewashed and clean, of red roads, grotesquely ornamented temples, tall good-looking men and women, and ever-prevailing wind.

Separated from the Sinhalese villagers of the interior by racial barriers and by the natural barrier of hitherto almost impenetrable forest, the Tamils of Trincomalee have kept a good deal of their caste; although most of the younger men have done a turn as house servants to the officers of the garrison, and could clean a gun or a pair of patent leather boots, pipeclay a helmet, and smoke master's cigars to perfection.

Leaving the native town, you come upon the plain, a considerable expanse of dusty greenish - blue grass made somewhat tricky for morning gallops by the excavations of the ever-present land-crab. With a final and more profound sigh the bullocks halt at the low Dutch-looking "rest-house." Pink and white oleanders are growing in green-painted tubs on the grass-plot before the verandah; the "sore-eyes"-tree rears its sleek leafless limbs by the mud-brick wall of the "compound," atoning for its want of shade by the magnificent crown of dazzling crimson

flowers by which it earns its name.

After a bath and breakfast you turn into the verandah for a little rest and quiet; the chairs are of an old pattern, left behind, probably, by the Portuguese, and "to sleep invite." Before you are well off, however, the cheroot-maker appears, and to get rid of him you order a hundred, which he proceeds at once to make on the back verandah, from bundles of rich dark leaf which he has brought for your inspection. Then the shoemaker salaams and grins and coughs until you notice him. He will make you "English muster" shoes of monkey leather, light and durable, with the further doubtful advantage that you need not take them off to go into a Hindu temple.

After him the white-suit tailor, the seller of "gems" or coloured crystals, the shell-collector, and sundry other uninvited natives, all anxious for your custom. So the forenoon wears away until tiffin is brought in, and after tiffin you are safe, for the whole country then sleeps for an hour or more.

As the sun sinks towards the west it is pleasant to stroll down to the beach, past the bungalows of the few officials, towards the dockyard. Walking along the low esplanade wall, you are struck by what is apparently a cemetery in the flat sand where a stream enters the harbour. There are wooden headstones with dates and curious names upon them. The new-comer is told that

these are the graves of coloured seamen who have died in his Majesty's service. In reality, they mark the spot where certain masts and spars have been buried in the sand to season. The dates show when they were put down, and the outlandish names are those of certain native woods used in the navy.

If there were a ship in, one would take a boat and call upon the officers, and perhaps adjourn with them to the Naval Club on "Sober Island." Sober Island is worth a chapter to itself: the very name calls up an inward chuckle in those who knew it thirty years ago, before the new batteries had cut up the lovely grounds and turned a tropical paradise into a barrack-yard. It was here that pretty little Charlie —, midshipman on board H.M.S. B——, dressed as a lady, entertained the Government agent of the province and his wife on tour, and was very nearly dismissed the service for it. He has now retired and succeeded his brother in the family honours; but he still wears curls, and his trim white beard does not quite hide the pink-and-white complexion that made him such a charming girl.

There was a "Tom Cringle" atmosphere of cheerful cups and practical joking on Sober Island that none who once breathed it are ever likely to forget.

But as there is no ship in, one should go up and call at the Fort. It is the usual style of Dutch fort, one of Cohoorn's probably, built chiefly from the

stones of a very ancient temple that in past ages made this hill one of the holy places of India. When I first passed through the gate-house there was a tennis-party going on at the upper end of the green near the Mess; or rather it wasn't going on, for it had been brought to an end in a very abrupt manner. It appears that two or three years previously a young fawn had been brought in by some officer who had shot its mother in the course of a shikar trip inland. The fawn became the pet of everybody, officers and men, and grew up into a lusty young stag, very much spoiled and somewhat unmanageable. On the afternoon of my call "Billy" was thirsty, and had gone to the well and trumpeted until one of the men came out and drew up a bucket of water for him. Billy was greedy and wanted the last drop, and in tilting the bucket to get it, the handle fell back and fixed itself over his bay antlers. Off he went, half mad with rage and fright, straight through the tennis-net, scattering the players and tearing round the barrack square. Eventually he got into one of the married men's quarters through the open door, where he smashed pictures, looking-glasses, and ornaments, and got into such a state of fright and fury that he had to be shot through the window. The men could hardly speak as they dragged him backwards out of the little room and pulled the bucket from over his fast-glazing eyes. There was no more tennis, of course; so, after

mutual salutations and social recognitions, we all moved up towards the Point—for it was nearing the hour of sunset, when a very ancient and fascinating religious ceremony would take place on the precipice just above the Fort.

I have said that the Fort is built very largely out of the stones from a famous Hindu shrine destroyed by the Dutch invaders about two centuries before my visit. The temple was dedicated to Siva, the destroyer, under his ancient name "Eiswara," the universal spirit. Though the temple has gone and its site is now desecrated by the dwellings of Tommy Atkins and his officers, the ancient faith still lingers and finds its expression in a form of worship of a romantic and mysterious character.

A little before sunset a young Brahmin priest, his head encircled by a fillet of large beads, his loins girt with a yellow cloth, takes his stand upon the giddy height of the farthest rock that rises from the dark and fathomless ocean. Some of the votaries perch themselves among the dangerous crags around, while the more timid kneel, prostrate themselves, or recline upon the short grass with which the promontory is clothed. The Brahmin, after ceremoniously performing his ablutions, places himself in various picturesque attitudes, chanting the while a Sanskrit hymn, and from time to time, as he drops some betel-leaves or rice into the sea below, bows with great reverence towards a chasm in the rock,

which is supposed to be the haunt of the great spirit. As the sun dips below the purple wall of sea the Brahmin waves a censer, then holds it at the full stretch of his arm above his head while the incense flames up, flickers, and dies out. Then as the perfume floats towards the people, he brings the service to a close by casting a cocoanut into the sea and receiving the offerings of the faithful. These consist of the smallest copper coin,—some of them bearing the cipher of the old Dutch East India Government,—rice stained with saffron, flowers, and betel-leaves.

How I longed for the brush of a Fortuny to paint this scene of romantic wildness and immemorial antiquity!

Just above the perilous pulpit on which the priest officiates the rock beetles upwards in a huge loose mass, on the summit of which stands a solitary pillar of stone, alternately square and octagonal, probably a relic of the original temple. The base bears the following half-effaced inscription:—

“Tot gedaghtenis van Francina van Rhede Tuen mydrecht Desen A° 1687: 24 April op Gereght.”

The memory of Francina is a sad one. It is an old story, of which the counterpart may be found in any coroner's court records in Middlesex. But the circumstances inspire me to try and tell it.

Jan Van Rhede was governor of the Fort and town of Trincomalee at the latter end of the seventeenth century. He was very young when first

appointed, and had sailed for Ceylon as a bachelor. The loneliness and tedium of his life at Trincomalee soon became insupportable, and he sought refuge in matrimony. As he could afford neither the time nor the expense of a journey to Europe and back, he was married “by the glove,” as it is called. That is to say, he sent a glove to his best man, who, with Van Rhede's glove upon his right hand and in the absent Van Rhede's name, married the lady of his friend's choice—the object of this curious arrangement being to enable the bride to take her passage as a married woman and sail to the East without the necessity of a chaperone. After a few brief years of wedded happiness the young wife succumbed to the effects of the climate and died, leaving one daughter to the care of her heart-broken husband. They buried her in the sunny garden of the Residency at the foot of a large and very beautiful tamarind-tree, which still shades her resting-place.

The care and education of little Francina now devolved upon her father and became the chief interest in his life. A nurse was found for her in the wife of a young sergeant of artillery, a Frisian woman, who, having no children of her own, devoted herself with all the kindness of her race to the governor's little daughter.

As the child grew beyond the simple teaching of her nurse, her father gradually introduced her to the higher subjects, and took infinite pains

and interest in the opening of her mind and the development of a naturally good intellect. There was no ladies' society in the garrison; the pay of Dutch officers did not admit of their marrying in their own rank, and the only married woman in the Fort was a Colombo half-caste of Portuguese extraction, very handsome and romantic, but lazy and vicious, and altogether an impossible associate for a girl in Francina's unfortunate position. So the latter, thrown upon herself for companionship, grew up into a reserved, almost grave young woman, innocent as a child, full of poetic fancies and romance, very pretty, but absolutely without any of the little arts and aids to beauty used by young ladies of that time in Europe. She dressed in a style half native, half original, and though it may seem frightful to ladies of the present day, it had a certain charm, and was infinitely better adapted to a tropical climate than the "smart" costumes to be seen nowadays in the Presidency towns in India. Her costume consisted of a long white undergarment of fine cambric, ornamented round the neck and bosom by little tucks and bands of lace; over this was a black hand-woven silk brocade, folded several times round the hips and forming a straight and rather scanty petticoat. Above the petticoat she wore a long sort of coat of native silk, rose colour shot with grey, with no collar and loose sleeves. The front of the coat was secured at the breast by a brooch of

seed pearls incrusting round a large pink topaz. The hard line of the coat at the neck was softened by the lace collar of the chemisette, which fell back on the shoulders, showing her graceful nape and the delicate white skin where her hair was drawn up to form her coiffure. Round her slender neck was a necklace of orange-tawny carnelian beads with little gold filigree settings, separated by six or seven strands of seed-pearls strung on white silk tied in a bow at the back.

She wore no shoes or stockings, except on Sundays and high days; but her small and shapely feet were protected by little grass slippers without heels.

Her hair was abundant, of a rich chestnut colour running into gold at the tips, and was plaited and coiled round and round her head so that it looked almost like a cap. She wore no hat or bonnet, but if it was necessary to go out during the heat of the day, she would carry a Chinese parasol of embroidered silk on a bamboo frame.

It was this quaint little figure that took instant possession of Captain Vermuyden's fancy when he landed from his ship in Trinco' harbour and went to pay his respects to the governor. She was lying in a cane chair in the spacious verandah when her father brought the young officer in to introduce him; and as she rose, slid her little feet into her slippers, and gave him her hand, the captain thought he had never seen anything quite

so charming before. He was a travelled man as well as a naval officer, and had seen much of women of different nationalities, and seldom found any difficulty in making himself acceptable. But to Francina, in her isolation and provincialism, he represented Europe and all she had read and heard about its doings. And he was a passable man : short and thick-set but not fat, of swarthy complexion, fearless grey eyes, long thin moustache, and dark-brown Spanish beard, he looked the man of action ; and even his Dutch uniform could not deprive him of a certain grace—the grace that goes with strength and command.

Had Madame Van Rhede been alive to tend her daughter she would have divined by instinct the danger of her child's intimacy with such a man, and would have restricted his visits within the limits of official punctilio. But Van Rhede saw no risk in the friendship which at once sprang up between his daughter and Vermuyden : it gratified him to find that the child he had educated was so well able to take her place in conversation with a travelled man of the world. The opportunities for the rapid growth of intimacy are a hundred times more favourable in the East than they are in Europe. In the words of our unlaurelled poet laureate, "There ain't no Ten Commandments," and the social laws which take their place in European society are, in the East, "more honoured in the breach than the observance." Life was even freer in

the distant colonies in the seventeenth century than it is in the nineteenth, though this may seem almost impossible to those who know only the present.

Vermuyden was waiting for orders, and made the most of his opportunities, as his habit was. Having little to do that could not be done for him by his subordinates, he was continually at the Residency, and after a fortnight's enjoyment found himself very much in love. As for Francina, she had caught him to her heart with all the strength of the deep current of romance that ran beneath the smooth surface of her inexperience and quite uneventful surroundings. Philip Vermuyden satisfied her eye and stirred her mind : in a few days, full of long *tête-à-tête* talks, he filled her heart. The exaltation of passion, the revelation of a new life, filled her eyes with an inner light, and the vision of travel, of intercourse at last with the world of her books and her father's early experiences, only added to her inward happiness. One still, tremulous, lovely Eastern night, as they stood together by the beach at the foot of the Residency garden, listening for the strange sweet "ting" of the singing-fish which would rise occasionally from the harbour depths, Vermuyden slipped a ring on the passive hand that lay in his. As he drew her to him she passed her arm round his neck, and kissed him long and passionately. It was her betrothal. Fortunately for her soul's peace the sound of oars

caught her lover's ear, and, disengaging himself from her tender embrace, he saw a man-of-war's gig pulling towards the governor's landing. They turned quickly towards the house, and arrived before the officer from the gig. Francina flew to her own rooms, where she lay, wide-eyed and sleepless, watching the great round stars from her little silk hammock in the verandah of her bedroom.

Vermuyden re-entered the dining-room almost as the newly arrived officer was announced. He was a good deal upset, but soon master of himself and able to feel what a crime he had escaped. The situation flashed upon him. Here were his orders, of course. Before him was a career, behind him a good service record; as to his social record, the Government was not too inquisitive. Here was action, almost the certainty of distinction, with a triumphant return to Holland, and the consolidation of his fortunes and interest by a prudent marriage. But Francina? Bah! The pardonable folly of a sailor ashore: what man would have behaved any better under the same circumstances? And after all, thank God, he had done the girl no harm. And yet, how sweet she was. Would it not be worth all the world to lose the world to gain her? Dear little Francina, the very thought of her in the sweet abandonment of her love brought tears into his weather-beaten eyes. But this passing emotion gave way to curiosity as the officer en-

tered the dining-room, saluted Vermuyden, and presented a packet of despatches to the governor.

Among these was a letter under flying seal for Vermuyden, directing him to weigh at once and sail for the Coromandel Coast, when he was to open a further letter containing sealed orders as to his future movements.

Vermuyden had intended to sleep on shore, but gladly accepted the lieutenant's offer to take him to his ship in the gig. The governor accompanied the two officers to the landing, and took a cordial farewell of Vermuyden, undertaking to make the latter's adieus and apologies to his daughter. Francina heard her father return alone, and lay waiting in vain for Philip's step. When the house was at last dark and quiet, she slipped barefooted along the corridor to the main verandah and round the angle of the house to the side where the guest-rooms were. The first of these was Vermuyden's, and the jealousies were wide open. She looked in, breathless. There was starlight enough to see that the white bed was empty. She crept in and saw that the captain's valise had been removed, and that the room he had so often occupied was now bare of all trace of him. She ran swiftly back to her own room and lighted a lamp. This, she knew, would bring her old Frisian nurse to her before long, and she was not mistaken. At about midnight a bulgy figure appeared round the screen and inquired

kindly if her young lady wanted anything.

"Where is our guest, Anna?"

"Gone aboard, my dear."

"Gone aboard, but why?"

He was to sleep here to-night so as to make an early start for the hot springs to-morrow."

"Yes, my love; but he will have to make an earlier start still to-morrow, but not for the springs."

"What do you mean, Anna?" cried the poor child, her heart sinking, her hands and feet numb as she sank upon her bed, sitting stiffly with strained eyes.

"Why, only that the captain's got his orders as he has been waiting for all this time. Eh? my darling, what is it?" and the good creature caught poor Francina in her arms as she fell forward.

"There, there, he'll come and bid you good-bye in the morning, my love, only be good and go to sleep now and don't let him see you looking any worse than your best: men are so vain he would think you were sorry to lose him."

Anna, though she crooned on in this reassuring way, was really alarmed. Her young mistress was not given to fainting and was really ill. The look in her eyes had startled her old nurse, recalling the look in the eyes of the girl's mother on the night she died in the delirium of remittent fever.

Laying her upon the bed she chafed her hands and feet, and when she opened her eyes, gave her a restorative and sat fanning her till nearly two o'clock.

"Thank you, Anna dear; I am better now. Do go to bed yourself, poor old thing; I am afraid I frightened you. It was very silly of me."

After reassuring herself once more by a searching look at the girl's face, to which the natural colour had now returned, the old nurse covered her feet with a shawl, kissed her, patted her, and stole away, extinguishing the lamp as she passed.

Francina lay very still, unnaturally awake, every energy of her being concentrated in the sense of hearing. One hour, two hours, she distinctly heard the guard changed at the Fort a mile away, and then—it seemed five minutes, really it was nearly an hour later—she heard click, click, click. There is no anchor song in the navy, but the click of the paul as it rises and falls in the ratchet of the capstan, once heard, is unmistakable.

Francina heard it and saw the truth in a flash. He was deserting her. Without a word he was going to leave her. He whose passionate embrace seemed round her still, whose tender vows were breathed into her ear but a few hours ago. He was leaving her to sail away, perhaps for ever, and without a word of farewell. He might be wrecked, killed in action, or—horrible thought!—tempted by another woman to forget her. She was to be left to her old lonely life again; her brief happy vision was passing away. As these torturing thoughts surged from her heart to her poor head and

seemed to strike against the back of her eyes, she sprang up from her bed, and went and leaned out over the balustrade of her verandah till she could see the harbour and the anchorage.

It was now nearly five o'clock, a thin cool breeze stirred the drooping festoons of Thunbergia. The vile tropic crow was silent for yet a little while. Overhead the pale blue sky was stippled with delicate mackerel dapples of amethystine cloud. The pomegranate blossom grew from brown to flame-colour as the faint sweet-smelling dawn gained in opalescence. In the stillness there were faint distant sounds, the shrill squeaking of a block under the strain of cordage, and as Francina gazed down she saw the limp white sails of her lover's vessel slowly rise and unfurl themselves like the wings of a bird ready to fly.

Very softly she passed out of the house, no one was yet awake, her little bare pink-heeled feet raised no echo on the heavy tiles: she ran silently across the wet grass towards the governor's landing, but as she ran she saw the ship slowly fill, bend to the wind, and stand for the harbour mouth. Without thought she turned and ran towards the Fort. Breasting the hill, she ran like a young fawn up the steep slope and round the rampart to the Point. Breathless, but unconscious of

her effort, she stood, a modern Hero, watching intently the harbour mouth. In a few long-drawn-out minutes she saw the vessel clear the headland and tack towards the north. Little puffs of woolly smoke curled out from her broadside, followed by dull reports as she returned the salute from Fort Oestenburg, and now she bent to the sea-breeze and came on towards the Point. A gallant sight she made on this fair morning, her men at quarters, her pennant streaming, and her signals showing brightly in the rising sunlight.

"It is a mistake," murmured the poor girl, "I was too late at the landing; but he will take me."

When the ship reached up abreast of her watch-tower Francina tore the brooch from her bosom and the coat from her shoulders, with one dexterous twist her skirt fell round her feet, and she stood in her flowing white robe, her bright hair blown across her bosom, her eyes wild with a strange impatience.

"Wait, Philip, I am coming," she called down to the sea, and throwing her fair white arms above her head she dived boldly down.

A purple film stained the glassy surface of the heaving tide, a fish-kite dropped to taste it and rose screaming—blood dropping from his beak.

A. S. MOSS BLUNDELL.

A VILLAGE IN THE NEW FOREST.

NESTLING among the graceful beeches and stately oaks of the New Forest, far from bustling towns, undisturbed by shrieking engines, lies a peaceful English village, hidden from the sweating cyclist, overlooked by the holiday "tripper." We have no use for visitors, nor, indeed, much accommodation for them, yet will I refrain from divulging the name of our village, lest the holiday "scorcher" be tempted to play serpent in our quiet Eden. From time to time a few artists have found us out, but all have gone back to their studios in prim Kensington, discomfited by luxuriant beauties of Nature which defy imitation. One, indeed, remains among us, still studying our glorious Forest in her varying moods. His works are strangers to Burlington House, but the woods have engulfed him for ever.

Ours is a scattered village, straggling over many a mile of forest land, though we number scarce six hundred souls. Our uneventful records go back for many centuries, yet time has dealt so gently with us that our people have in some measure retained the habits of their ancestors, and it is even possible to fancy that the Saxon churls, if they could but rise again, would detect little change of importance in the daily life of this happy Arcadia. For our people do, to this day, make their livelihood out of the Forest upon whose borders the

village stands. Few pay rent or taxes; the thatched cottages and the plots of land upon which they stand belong to the occupiers, and have been handed down in the families for generations. Every cottager is the proud owner, not of "three acres and a cow," but of three cows and boundless acres. Our "Commoners'" or "forest" rights entitle us to the free use of such pasturage as these Crown lands afford; and a pretty sight it is to watch the village cattle browsing upon the green lawns and open moors, to which they wend their way soon after daybreak. Toward evening they return of their own volition, each to her own farmyard, their bells tinkling melodiously in the still air. No need here of cow-herds: the cattle, free by Act of Parliament to choose their pasturage, are seldom known to stray. And how enviable their lot, compared with that of your suburban cow, or of cattle penned in a field! Unless, indeed, the suburban cow has acquired the philosophy of Hamlet by sheer stress of civilisation and hereditary acquiescence in unnatural restrictions. There is room to stretch the moral, but I refrain. Milk and butter, so cheaply produced, are sold at full market prices in the neighbouring towns, and thus we obtain groceries, flour, and the few essentials of life which the Forest does not produce. Pigs

and poultry also are kept by every Commoner, the former being entirely self-supporting for some months in the year, especially when the beech-nuts and acorns are falling. There is but little traffic in eggs, though some are sent to the towns. Not much meat is consumed by our hardy Commoners, though a joint of pork or veal graces every board on Sundays. Eggs, home-cured bacon, with bread, butter, and suet-puddings, serve for work-day consumption. Good, wholesome diet, too, when fruit and vegetables are plentifully added to the scale.

The daily work of the Commoners will already be suggested to all who know the country-side elsewhere. It comprises the care of cattle, pigs, and poultry, in addition to agricultural labour upon their small farms and holdings. The few farms in our vicinity do not afford regular employment to many of the villagers, but there is work to be had, for men who need it, upon the estates of the neighbouring landowners. Indeed, during the hay-harvest, the scarcity of labourers is as keenly felt here as in many other rural districts. The soil, impoverished by the Forest, is too poor for cereals, and scarce any wheat is grown for ten miles round. We are content, like most Englishmen, to buy foreign flour; otherwise we are self-supporting. Instead of coal, we burn logs and faggots upon our open hearths, quite in the old English style. Wood of various kinds can be

bought from the Crown at about four shillings the cart-load. Oak and beech logs are also sold by the "fathom" at very moderate prices, the "fathom" being a somewhat variable measure judged by the woodmen. Oak faggots, six feet long and four in circumference, cost the Commoner eight to ten shillings the hundred. For fire-lighting, furze-faggots are always used, and the bundles of firewood sold in towns are unknown.

The care of the Forest involves the regular employment of a little army of woodmen, most of whom are recruited from these Forest hamlets. At certain seasons additional hands are required to assist in the felling and "splitting" of timber, the cartage of logs to the railway, and so forth. At midsummer, too, temporary hands patrol the woods by night, the special work of these guards being to extinguish the fires that frequently ravage the enclosures. Forest fires are attributed mainly to the carelessness of gipsies and picnic parties, for, when the bracken is parched, the man with the camp-kettle and box of matches becomes a terror to the verderers. Of late years stringent rules have been framed, restricting the liberties formerly enjoyed by the gipsies; yet these experienced vagrants are probably less mischievous than the ignoramus with the camp-kettle or the careless smoker. To become a woodman, with some prospect of promotion to the grade of keeper, is the ambition of many lads.

The keepers are picturesquely housed in the silent depths of the woods, and their good wives offer hospitable welcome to the sportsman and the tourist. Let the tourist be careful how he offers payment for his cup of tea or glass of home-brewed mead: in most cases the tendering of money will be resented. Beware, too, that home-brewed mead!

Passing mention must be made of the bracken-harvest reaped in the late autumn by our thrifty Commoners, when the bracken has lost its sap and begun to wither. Boundless acres of this beautiful vegetation may be cut and garnered by the freemen of the Forest. They use the dry fern in their stables, where it forms an excellent substitute for straw. A pretty sight it is to watch the returning Forest carts, piled high with the gold and crimson tribute of glades and moors. The great bulk of the bracken is never cut, so plentiful is the luxurious growth in our neighbourhood. The bracken-harvest, as some lovers of art may remember, was the subject of a very striking picture by Mr Short, of Lyndhurst, which was exhibited two or three years ago at Burlington House.

Among the specialists in our village is Mr X., the "Marksman," a most genial and worthy man, whose function it is to superintend the marking of the Forest ponies. He, too, like the keepers and woodmen, is a servant of the Woods and Forests Department. Each section of the Forest is superintended by a

verderer, who acts as deputy to the high official who, in his turn, is deputy to the great man who controls the destinies of English forests. I would we had more forests and fewer officials, though the latter are very useful and pleasant people. These posts, it is said, are usually conferred on the hereditary principle. In effect, one must be born a verderer or a marksman; and, when all is said, it is not the worst method of regulating such appointments. Thackeray, it may be remembered, whimsically deplored his ineligibility for any of the Government sinecures conferred upon famous writers of the eighteenth century. Why should not the author of the 'Forest Lovers' or of 'Paulo and Francesca' be offered a verderership? or why not a Government retreat in the heart of the Forest for meritorious but struggling English poets?

Such, in brief, is the work of our villagers, and it will surprise few to learn that men and women of these Forest hamlets develop the sturdy independence of character which one would expect to find in a class that has learnt to live upon the natural products of the soil. In these hamlets the workers are not far removed from a state of pure Socialism. Judged by a money standard they are poor; judged by any other, their comfort, independence, and prosperity are probably unequalled in any industrial community in the Kingdom. Here again the moral might

be stretched to fit the theories of Mr Bernard Shaw and other reformers; for painless extinction of the landlord lies at the base of all Socialistic schemes. The gentry, sparsely scattered about the neighbourhood, find difficulty in hiring labour, and the young women can seldom be persuaded to undertake domestic service. Our people, in short, have learned, as their ancestors before them, to live upon the Forest. They obtain from the land nearly all the essentials of life, and cheerfully forgo many of the superfluities which men in towns have come to regard as essentials.

The tastes and habits of the Commoners seem to be affected in no small degree by the isolation of their hamlets from the towns. The people have intermarried for so many generations that, in this village, for example, some four or five family names predominate, and almost every native of the place can boast fifty or sixty relatives. Inter-marriage has not conspicuously lowered the intelligence of the people, though how this bold assertion is to be squared with the theories of scientists I know not. The Commoners do not strike one as being duller-witted than country-folks elsewhere; they are appreciably more intelligent than villagers in the West of England.

In the practical business of life both men and women are skilful, industrious, and thrifty. Without these qualities they could not live upon the poor soil of the Forest, and one may

judge that the general level of intelligence is raised somewhat above the rustic average by close observation of Nature's laws. The ordinary wage-earning countryman may plod through life without using his brains; the Forester must observe. He must learn also to be something of a jack-of-all-trades, for in these isolated hamlets the life is almost as primitive as in the backwoods of Canada. Five years ago there was no butcher in our village, nor, to this day, could a plumber, tinker, or tailor be found within a dozen miles. We learn, you must know, to jog along very well without these specialists, and could dispense with our solitary policeman without, I fancy, any sensible decline in morals. Two years ago a Commoner tried to evade the dog-tax; and more recently the village was perturbed by a case of suicide. That is our whole record of crime for the period in question, and the policeman is putting on flesh perceptibly. Poaching upon the Crown lands was almost a recognised industry in bygone years, and, half a century back, large stores of smuggled spirits used to be hidden in the Forest. Many of the old farms boast their secret cellars, now, of course, disused. To-day there is but little poaching, owing, in part, to the scarcity of the two species of deer once so plentiful. The trapping and shooting of the rabbits that abound on the moors doubtless continues, but the keepers and verderers seldom prosecute poachers of ground - game.

Other game is no longer so plentiful as to attract poachers, although keen sportsmen may now and again bag a pheasant or a brace of ducks without much risk of detection. A full licence for the season costs £20—a prohibitive rate fixed in the interests of the well-to-do.

A popular form of "sport" among the peasants is the destruction of squirrels, and this wanton cruelty is unchecked by the Forest Commissioners. On Sundays and holidays men and boys frequently indulge in this amusement. The pretty little animals, scarcely wild enough to realise their danger, are killed by means of "squirrel-sticks," which resemble the Zulu "knob-carrier." These knobbed-sticks can be thrown between the branches of the trees with considerable accuracy of aim. Another cruel custom, which, however, the keepers are tardily beginning to check, is the wholesale shooting of birds on Christmas Day. On this anniversary, of all others, gangs of men deliberately ravage large tracts of the Forest, shooting not only game birds but every living creature within range. This annual atrocity is, of course, illegal, and should have been stopped long ago. It is an example worth noticing of the survival of barbarous customs in our rural districts, but I should be loath to convey the impression that the Forest peasantry are habitually cruel to animals. "I don't hold with torturing of 'em," said a neighbour of mine as he stood watching a writhing adder whose

back he had broken. Yet I had to entreat him to put the poor reptile out of its misery before it occurred to him to strike a second time. An extreme case, perhaps—for these Forest adders are more dangerous to life than is commonly supposed. They are also unpleasantly numerous, and are given to laying their eggs in the farm dunghills.

Many of the cottages in our village are eloquently primitive, with their mud walls, tiny windows (rarely opened), and thatched roofs. Primitive as these dwellings are, they are at least picturesque, and blend harmoniously with the Forest scenery. Nowadays we are beginning to erect hideous cottages of staring red brick, slate-roofed, of course, and in all respects worthy the suburbs of overgrown cities. We have fallen, alas! into the clutches of the jerry-builder, but it is consoling to reflect that the old mud walls and thatched roofs will survive long after these atrocious modern eyesores have crumbled to decay. How grimly typical of an inartistic race are these modern dwellings of the poor!

If love of beauty be as near akin to virtue as John Ruskin insisted, the villagers have not attained a high standard of morals. They do not seem to feel, much less appreciate, the abiding charm of the Forest, nor can one discover that the beautiful setting in which their daily life is framed has served as a refining influence. On Sundays and holidays one would expect to find troops of

happy men and maids picnicing in the woods, gathering wild-flowers, or exploring the grassy tracks leading to infinitely varied glades, copses, and moors. At the least one would expect to meet in one's rambles a few pairs of lovers, attracted by the solitude. But it is not so: you may walk for days and meet no human beings save keepers, gipsies, and woodmen. To enjoy a holiday, our working-folks think it needful to harness their ponies and jolt off to the nearest town. The desire for change of scene is entirely natural, but their habitual avoidance of the woods on Sundays is damnably suggestive of indifference to the beauties of nature. They are fatigued by labour, it may be argued, and prefer to rest in their unventilated rooms, surfeited by the Sunday dinner of pork and vegetables. The dull Sabbath routine and mid-day gorge may, indeed, create distaste for scenery; yet what so invigorating, even after a surfeit of pig, as a stroll in the shady woods? Custom is a sad disillusioner the world over; there is no doubt, I fear, that it has staled for our villagers the infinite variety of the Forest. This, it will be agreed, is a disappointing conclusion, and it is supported, moreover, by other evidences of coarseness in this sturdy, independent people. Their taste in pictorial art is as deplorably low as that of the workers in our cities. The cottager whose windows command a glorious view of the

rolling Forest, or from whose front door one may step straight into a leafy paradise of graceful beeches, is not ashamed to sully his mud walls with garish coloured prints and execrable oleographs. The contrast does not offend him; he is content to turn his back to the windows and rest his eyes upon some crude print of Tommy Atkins in flaming scarlet taking leave of his Sarah-Jane in purple frock with green trimmings. There is something deeper than mere ignorance here, and it seems less excusable than in the town workman. One may detect, I fear, kindred evidences of coarseness in many other tastes and pursuits of the Forest villager. The conditions of the life have made him manly, self-reliant, courageous, thrifty, temperate, and, on the whole, contented; but familiarity with Nature has failed to refine his mind.

Unreasonable to expect indications of refinement in these sturdy people, it may be; but one is not so optimistic as to condemn them for their love of gossip, their absorbing interest in the tattle and scandal of village life. Gossip and scandal are known to flourish with the greatest vigour in small communities, and in our village, at least, the weeds are plentifully manured. That little clerical intrigue in a Puritan village to which literature owes 'The Scarlet Letter,' and numerous adaptations from Hawthorne's fine novel,¹ would have excited slight interest in a manufactur-

¹ 'The Silence of Dean Maitland,' for example.

ing town. Here, it must be confessed, the proportion of illegitimate births is not small, and would be far larger but for the timely intervention of Mother Church. The simplicity of the village maiden is an exploded myth, still useful, no doubt, for the purposes of sentimental fiction and a florid type of drama. The town-bred girl is usually far simpler in sexual matters than the milk-maid: whether ignorance of natural laws renders her the purer-minded is another question. Here the "old women of both sexes," to borrow the phrase of Lord St Vincent, are very keenly concerned with local love affairs. The question of interest is not so much whether Tom Hodge will marry Sue Lumpkin, as *when he will have to do so*. For, to do him justice, Hodge, in these parts, is not very unwilling to go to church and have the knot tied when propriety jogs his conscience. My rural experience does not enable me to assert that Foresters are conspicuously immoral in the conventional meaning of that much abused term; but if the proportion of scandal-mongers in this village is not higher than the average, rural England must be in bad case.

In another respect the women of this hamlet are open to unfavourable criticism. Despite the intermarriage among our inhabitants, or more probably because of it, the cottage women are usually on bad terms with their neighbours and relatives. The most trivial causes excite jealousy and lead to relent-

less feuds. I recall a typical example.

Mary Ann T—— and Julia D—— had been friends, as well as relatives and near neighbours during half a lifetime, when, as the fates willed it, the general servant at the vicarage sullied her character, and was instantly discharged with ignominy by Mrs Vicar. Being now without a servant, the vicar's wife engaged Mary Ann T—— to come in by the day. All went well for a while, until, as it chanced, the vicar ordered a duck from Julia D——, and imprudently desired her to deliver the innocent bird ready cooked. Julia D—— complied, but her action so bitterly offended her cousin that all intercourse between the two families abruptly ceased.

The women make it their business to know to an ounce their neighbours' output of butter, precisely when the neighbours' cows are expected to calve, and a hundred other details of domestic life, for the prying into which even the excuse of commercial competition is lacking. Ill-feeling between families appears to stimulate the circulation of all such trivial gossip: the more you detest Mrs Hodge, the more imperative it becomes to learn the most intimate details of her wardrobe. This insatiable, malicious curiosity is doubtless noticeable in every village, and is a trait of country life which is not in the least degree modified by the prosperity of our little community.

Religion divides us into three sects, each of equal numerical strength. Two hundred of us

attend church, two hundred are chapel-goers, and two hundred wholly abstain from public worship. The abstainers include some of the steadiest and most industrious men of the village, but there is no lack of industry in any sect, and one rarely sees a drunken man, even on Saturday nights. I am bound to add that our sobriety is in some degree attributable to the weakness of the local ale. We boast but one public-house to 600 inhabitants, so that lack of competition affects the strength of the beer, and is a blessing in disguise. The proportion of religious abstainers, if I may so term them, would appear to be somewhat larger than in most villages, and this may be attributed to the diminished influence of squire and parson in our semi-socialist community. In many parishes the workers are more or less compelled to attend church or chapel: here there is virtually no penalty for abstention, owing to the conditions of labour already explained. Our worthy squire is a regular church-goer; our vicar is generally respected. The proportion of "backsliders" cannot be attributed to laxness in high places.

Among our dissenters is a charming character, Abel Spring, whom, if space permitted, I would essay to sketch in his rugged, narrow outlines of piety and indiscreet zeal. Let me digress for a few lines at least. "Ah, sir," he bellowed at me one fine morning—the good man invariably bellows and at very close quarters—"Ah, sir, there's some as don't

believe as the Lord God watches over us. They'll argue that one can't have a message or a warning nowadays; but I know different."

"You think that you have had such a message, Abel?"

"More than once," he shouted. "Now, just listen to this, sir. Just a twelvemonth ago, come next Sunday, I was coming home from the meeting at B——. I were mortal tired, I were, for I'd had a hard day's preaching, besides walking both ways. Well, sir, I'd got past Prickly Wood corner about a mile or more, when I seemed to hear the Lord saying to me, 'Turn back, Abel Spring, and go to they gravel pits.' At first I taken no notice, and I walks right on. The voice spoke again before I'd gone a quarter o' a mile, 'Turn back, Abel Spring.' The voice was in my heart, you'll understand. I allow no one else could have heard it, if they'd been walking with me. But I was tired and wanted my supper. I didn't want to go back. 'Lord,' I says, 'don't go a-sending me all that way back for nothing. What can I do at they gravel pits?' 'Turn back, Abel Spring,' says the voice again, and then I turns back."

"You were difficult to convince, Abel," I hazarded.

He did not heed me, nor admit, as I suspect was the case, that heavenly voices had deluded him on previous occasions.

"And what do you think I found at the pits?" he roared.

"Some muddy water, perhaps."

"No, sir," he said impressively. "I found Jim Wimper's old donkey, what had fallen in and broke his leg!"

The casual visitor to one of these Forest villages would be likely to suppose that we suffer chronically from dulness, and to pity us for our long winter evenings, when mud lies thick upon the roads and the west wind moans in the trees. This is no place to discuss the reputed disadvantages of the country-side in winter, but it may be confessed that some of the women, though not, I think, the majority, grow weary of the monotony and isolation. We lack, it is true, the usual parochial machinery for killing time, but Penny Readings, personally conducted by the average vicar, are not enlivening, and are apt to recall the saying of the French cynic, that "Life would be tolerable were it not for its pleasures." The Foresters do not read, except, indeed, their country newspaper, and a small circulating library might prove a boon in all such villages.

What effect, it will be asked, is the school board producing upon the rising generation of Commoners? This, to be sure, is a very interesting point. Our primitive habits are likely to be affected by education—whether for good or ill, who shall determine? In our village there was very little "book-learning" forty years ago, and many of the greybeards cannot read. A moss-grown stone in the pretty churchyard marks the last resting-place of a prosperous farmer who appears to

have defrayed the whole cost of local education in those untutored days. So, at least, his epitaph implies. Already great changes in the manners and customs of the Forest folk have been effected by the advance of the railways, which I take to be quite as strong an influence as popular education. Elderly residents have spoken to me of the wild orgies that used to be held in our village less than forty years ago. A ruined barn is yet standing in which, as I am told, the villagers of both sexes would assemble at Christmas-time for a week's debauch. Here, behind barred doors, they would carouse, unchecked by the policeman, who, indeed, probably joined the revellers. This Christmas orgie of nymphs and satyrs, it is said, was an institution handed down from the riotous old smugglers. If the tales are true (and I think they have some foundation), women as well as men remained night and day in the old barn, sleeping the sleep of the drunken, waking to resume the bestial debauch. Such revels, it is needless to say, are now but a pleasant memory.

Peep into the pretty school-house among the fir-trees, and you will see to-day a hundred neatly clad children, not many generations removed from the riotous smugglers and primitive foresters to whom allusion has been made. The schoolhouse is specklessly clean, the children are taught upon the approved school-board system, tempered by the squire's individual fads. The little maids appear to use curling-tongs, and the boys'

trousers are innocent of patches. They are listening attentively to an "object-lesson" on the habits of the kangaroo, and one finds it difficult to believe that these learned youngsters will be content to live, like their forebears, by the sweat of their brow and wring their bread from the soil.

"What are you going to be when you're a man?" I asked a small boy in a clean collar.

"A teacher, sir," he said smugly.

There it is, you see. That boy's father has never deigned to restrict his hairy throat by wearing a starched collar. In his young days he probably craved to be a pirate, or maybe a marksman. The little girls are learning (though not in the school) to tinkle little tunes on the pianoforte; the big ones cannot make butter nor milk the cows skilfully. A pity these maids of the open Forest should drift into stuffy shops, exchanging their birth-right for the genteel privilege of selling ribbons behind a counter. But such, I greatly fear, must be the effect of book-learning upon the rising generation. Will our sturdy Forest folk rise superior to the march of superficial education? I trust they may. It is, at least, a healthy sign that a small corps of Mounted Infantry Volunteers was successfully raised last year in the Forest. These men can ride well, and shoot tolerably with the shotgun; they are, perhaps, the finest raw material in England for Yeomanry or Mounted Irregulars. Yet, I doubt their

capacity to submit to discipline. The old independence, the stir of the old smuggling blood, is opposed to the traditions of British pipeclay.

To-day, however, the New Forest peasantry is still a distinct, clearly individualised class of the rural community. Skilled farmers and husbandmen they are not, but they can live, and live well, in this land of crowded cities, very much as the Forest peasants lived five hundred years ago. Hence they are very interesting and worthy of study.

These impressions of the Commoners of the New Forest are the fruit of the writer's residence in a small, isolated hamlet during two peaceful years. They are set down as personal impressions and nothing more, and it may well be that a more sympathetic observer would declare my little sketch out of drawing. I have endeavoured, however, to do justice to the rugged independence of these sturdy industrious people, to note their virtues and defects without bias. To fail in such a task were easy, for it is given to few of us rightly to interpret the mainsprings of human conduct. A semi-socialistic community, scarcely alive to the significance of its own freedom from the normal conditions of labour, is, I am convinced, worthy of careful study at the hands of our social reformers. When all is said, one cannot but regret the scarcity of forests and foresters in this land of smoky chimneys-stacks, where strenuous labour is too often misapplied.

CHARLES GLEIG.

THE CONQUEST OF CHARLOTTE.¹

PART II.—THE HAPPY ISLANDS.

CHAPTER XI.—WITHIN THE JAWBONES.

THE doorways set deep in the garden sea-walls of St Brise afford easy access to the shore: to loungers or to sea-bathers by day, and by night to any whose enterprise requires a clandestine coming and going. One of these doorways gives upon a garden of a romantic and old-world character, from which a pend, or close, gripped at the throat by a massive main-door, leads out upon the High Street. Over against this close on the opposite side of the street is another, which in turn admits to the well of a staircase, and on the back or landward side of this in my school-days there lay a garden sloping upwards to the inner wall of a workyard, wherein the principal industries were the sawing of wood and the fashioning of cart-wheels. In this wall was a door, always kept locked upon the workyard side. I have dwelt on these particulars that you might understand the rapid passage, inland from the sea, thus afforded to Rab Cuick in those pursuits of his to which my silly eyes had been shut and now were to be opened.

The woodyard belonged to the man Nicholson, who owned also the boat-building yard at

the back of the harbour. This Nicholson was an elderly crazy kind of fellow, who for years had spent his time in an attempt to perfect a boat of a new build which, as you have heard, was known in St Brise as "Cocked-hat Nicholson's boat." The invention was to come to a lamentable end; but it seems that there was sense in it. Possibly Nicholson had heard or read some imperfect story of the centre-board which the American yacht-builders were using; at any rate, the notion working in his head was that smart and safe tacks could be made in the choppy seas of the Firth by a boat with a keel shaped like a cocked hat. And I am told that in the bay at this day there lies a yacht with a keel which could not be described better than by the figure that won for the crazy boat-builder the name of "Cocked-hat Nicholson."

So immersed in this invention was Nicholson that he left the management of his wood-yard to a foreman, Tam Cornfoot by name, a fellow of such slender wit that I cannot conceive a business not too heavy for it to support. Had they rested on none other than Tam, the woodyard affairs, including as they did speculations in

¹ Copyright, 1901, by Dodd, Mead, & Co., in the United States of America.

timber (delicate matter always), must have fallen to the ground. As it was, they were directed to the most fruitful ends by one whose title to put a little finger upon them did not exist. This, of course, was Rab Cuick; and, needless to say, self-interest, though it might never discover itself, was Rab's sure and only title for doing anything. The peculiarly dense nature of Tam Cornfoot, his independent responsibility, and especially the depth of his saw-pit and its advantageous situation, inland on the hill, yet within easy flight from the shore,—all these came so happily to Rab's hand in his illegal enterprises that it suited him to conserve them in their present fruitful way of going.

See the rascal in this affair! The boat-builder to whom the yard belonged dallied with his vanity at the back of the harbour, while his bank account grew all the bigger. Tam Cornfoot, with always a crown in his pocket now, fell into the tipping ways from which a straitness of means had kept him hitherto. Rab Cuick might have stepped into the feckless Tam's shoes, and from them into the feckless master's, had he cared. But no! I do not say that he did not pocket a penny of the profit he made for the woodyard. Yet, later, in my office of accountant, I had placed in my hands papers connected with Cocked-hat Nicholson's estate, and my scrutiny of them showed that the main share of the profit went to the owner. Rab Cuick mastered the business (for him, an easy

task), and was at pains to guide it to a fortune. . . . Was it all for the sake of a little advantage it gave him in his dirty, ill-paid trafficking? I cannot be sure of him!

"Man, Rab," I said to him years afterwards, when I had discovered the extent of the business he had handled, "you missed a chance of a lifetime. If you had just held on steadily, and watched yourself, you might have been at the head of a fine business."

We were standing on this St Brise shore when I said it. I had run down to St Brise on business, and before returning home sought a sniff of the caller seas; and on the brae beside it I found Rab Cuick, pacing back and forwards with his hands in his pockets, three steps and a turn like a Cellardyke fisherman; not, with him, because of the habit of walking a short deck, but because of the consuming restlessness within him.

"You're a bit from home to-day," I hailed him (for he was living in the Back Bowes then).

"And you?" he whistled back. "Though, to be sure, it's nothing wonderful for a man of affairs like you to have business call you from your own door."

I told him how it was with myself. "Just a thought," I explained, "to seek again a glimpse of the happy islands; or maybe the sea-witch calling, as your Charlotte would say." (Though, in truth, Charlotte was the sea-witch.)

He stepped closer to me, and

with a frankness I had never seen in him before. "Ay, Dauvid, you feel it too?" he said. "I cannot bide away from it for long. I cannot sleep o' nights for thinking of the sea."

Strange to find this man coming down from the Bowes for no other errand (if, indeed, he was speaking the truth) than to pace back and forward on the sea-shore, like the bear on a tether in Ord's menagerie!

It was then that I reminded him of the grand chance he had missed. "At the head of a fine business; and then, Rab, you need never have been away from the shore!"

"Haud your tongue, young man!" he cried, his face white with passion. "I might have known that you would not understand. What do you think I come down to St Brise to hear the sea say to me? To silver crowns add silver crowns—is that the burden of her sang? Would you, if you had a note o' music in you? . . . I've heard tell you play the fiddle; would you tune it to a melody o' six-and-eightpence? Country loves, country lives?—bits of airs to sing in the gloaming, or counting the till when the shop's shut o' nights. The fine music's the grand music; you cannot get away from it. A human soul's a human soul, no doubt, in the Bowes wife that never saw beyond her bleaching-green as in a king, and equally presentable to its Maker. I'm no judge o' that; but among men, I ken, place and power are the things that interest,

the things that count. We're made so—or, by God, I'm made so at any rate—that only the big things in the world can tune all the strings of our being,—the pomp o' nature and the pomp o' man. What? Wife and weans, Robbie Burns sang, ye say? Man, man, d'ye not see he was just making the best of it. His heart was aye on the road to Jamaica, aye roving, and the shortness of his tether broke it. It's a fine thing to say 'My mind to me a kingdom is.' That's a story for a man with a foot in the grave, affecting resignation. Look at the sea, man, look at it, look at it, think of all the roads upon it and where they lead to; and you would bid me be content cooped up in the narrow ways of Fife!"

"Content, or not content," said I, "even making the best of it, like Robbie Burns, or any of the lave of us."

"Ettling for half a lifetime to oust a man out of a wood-yard, and dying fairly rich in it at the end. That's a way of living like anybody's singing. Anybody can sing a sang: how many can vocalise it?"

That was how the specious rascal prided himself on his way of doing. He may have had cause. He must have had cause. I cannot be sure of him. Yet, spite of his fine speaking, Rab, I know, was the ruin of all connected with the woodyard in the end. One of my later recollections is of days when Rab and Tam Cornfoot were inseparable, in a very rapsallion condition: Rab, alert, agile, and cunning de-

spite his breakdown, and Tam wooden and in all ways debased in accord with it. It was difficult to guess the bond that attached the creature to the rascal who had been his evil star. On the other hand, Rab's intention in the conjunction never was in doubt. Having fallen upon times when his wit was less eagerly sought after, and had to assault if it was to carry those whom he met, he kept the unfortunate wood-sawyer close to him as a foil.

"This is my friend, Mr Tammias Cornfit; he's a little dirty and has a nasty smell" (Thomas had taken to cobbling as a last resource), "but he can't help it;"—in some such manner he would accost you, to your indignation it is true, but also, be it confessed, to your entertainment as well. I remember that once, when Tam was arrested on some thieving charge, Rab protested his support of his *alibi* strenuously, causing no end of precognitions thereby; and it turned out to be no more than a rascally joke as to his having caught a whiff of Tam in the Sil'er Wood at the alleged moment of the theft—the Sil'er Wood being more than a mile from the seat of the offence, and rather less from the Back Bowes stable, where, Rab swore, he caught the aroma of him. And he proposed to put in as evidence some experiments to show that that aroma did not carry beyond the seventeen hundred and sixty yards with the wind coming off the sea.

While I was still a man in the making at Foster's, however, it suited Rab to cause Tam to appear before the world as the mainspring of the business, although he was no more than the indicating hand showing the working of Rab's brain. For the same reason also, because it suited Rab, the woodyard doors were closed against us. The main entrance was at the head of Dishington's Wynd, conspicuous by being surmounted by the jawbones of a stranded whale. I cannot remember that I was ever forbidden to enter; yet certainly there existed at the back of our minds an understanding imposed on us by Rab that we were never to do so. By some association of ideas, indeed, the jawbones had come to represent for me, in a dim uneasy manner, the mystery, the disreputable mystery, surrounding the Rascal. Thus, although Charlotte Cook and her brothers left us now and then to go in and out of the woodyard, we never accompanied them, but rather waited without until they rejoined us.

I had been at Foster's nearly three years, and it was well understood that when the summer vacation came round my school-days would be at an end. Mr Michael Trail was to enter me at his law office at Town of Tarvit in the autumn. As it fell out, some months before that one of the clerks, being detected in pilfering the stamps, ran away to be a sailor, and his

stool was offered my father for me if he would undertake to bring me forthwith to sit upon it. One Saturday in April, therefore, Mr Stein arrived in St Brise. There was lying at the moment close by the town a body of militia, and because of this and of a talk of volunteering and the like in the air, we boys at Foster's were filled with the martial spirit, and had raised a corps of our own, commanded by young David Cook. Colonel Dave was a stern disciplinarian (modelling his discipline, indeed, on Mr Foster's), and there was fixed for this Saturday afternoon a full dress parade at which, it was understood, Harry Turbayne, the Provost's son, was to be lifted upon the triangle (if he could be inveigled to it), for deserting from a forced march to prove the strawberries in his grand-aunt's garden at Cluny. "Plated in habiliments of war," as the play says, therefore, I was going out of Aunt Sarah's gate as my father entered, and I ran fair into his arms.

"Where are you going?" he said after a hurried greeting during which he had brought me round to the rear of the house.

"Parade at two," I answered with a salute.

"Huts!" he cried, looking me over. "Take off these things and come inside with me. I have news for you."

"But what will the colonel say?" I asked, hesitating.

"What colonel?"

"Colonel Dave Cook," I answered. "He'll arrest me—maybe shoot me."

"Cooks, Cooks, damn the Cooks!" he cried in a fury. "Take these things off: you're too old for that nonsense. You are to go back with me to-night. The place in your Uncle Michael's is waiting you."

This was news indeed. I threw my trappings into an outhouse and followed my father indoors.

When I entered the parlour, Aunt Sarah was already pecking at him—her usual reception. My father was thin-skinned, and generally suffered much from it; to-day, to my surprise, he took it with a callous spirit.

"So Michael has made a place for him," she was saying as I went in. "I knew he was to. We must do the best we can for poor Grace's boy."

He seemed with a tolerant motion of the hand to push her away from him.

"But if you are to deserve our concern, David,"—she addressed herself to me,—“remember who you are on your mother's side. To that you owe your good fortune—see you do it no discredit in Mr Trail's office."

My father heard, for he flushed slightly, but his thoughts were busy elsewhere. His face wore an eager and happy look, that I had learned to associate with each fresh forlorn attempt to wrestle with the fate that stood between him and a supervisorship. It said, "This time, for a certainty, I have the advantage

and will be equal to the occasion." And what could the occasion be but Rab Cuick himself?

I, to whom that thought brought no consolation, was all red-hot resentment at Aunt Sarah's speech. It wounded my self-respect to see my father so complacent.

"Uncle Michael 'll teach me his business himself," was my insolent retort.

"If David Shirra's teachable," she answered sourly.

"David!" cried my father, with reprimand in the accent, but not altogether ill-pleased, it was easy to see, at my heat.

"I have a letter for you to deliver," he continued. "For Mr Stein in the Excise. You'll find him at his office; if not there, then at the bonded warehouses. You know them?"

"Close by Rab Cuick's," I answered.

My father made a movement of annoyance.

"The very next door," cried Aunt Sarah with a thin laugh; "and still they can't put salt on his tail."

"We'll see, we'll see!" my father answered in angry elation, starting to pace the room. "And, Sarah," he went on, stopping to look at her meaningly, "there were some folks, you ought to remember, whose tails could have been salted, but weren't, for their family's sake."

"Ay! Grace was a better catch than her father," she said, giving him a contemptuous nod.

He turned his back on her and handed me the letter with-

out a word. Evidently he had something in his mind that was a salve to that stroke.

"See that you deliver it soon, and are soon back," he said. "If Mr Stein or any of the officers—anybody in fact, should ask for me, remember, tell them I've just run down for you, and that we return home after tea."

"It isn't possible," said Aunt Sarah. "I can't pack the boy's things by then."

"Send them after him, then," he answered brusquely. "We make a start to-night." He spoke in great glee. "If you meet any companions, say good-bye to them; any sweetheart—bid your adieus; you may not see her again." He was moved indeed out of his usual reserve and decorum. "But, mind, come back soon. We make an early start."

So saying, my father accompanied me downstairs, and I left him smoking his pipe on the back-garden green.

I set out in search of Mr Stein, elated at my change of fortune. My step was jaunty, as suited one who from henceforth was to take a man's place in the world: more than my step, I was to learn, had caught the trick of manhood. As I came within sight of the narrow neck of the High Street stretched eastwards to Rab Cuick's and the offices of the Excise, the younger Charlotte turned up Dishington's Wynd, destined, I was sure, for the woodyard. The beat of my heart to pursuit shook me with sudden dismay, and in that moment of panic the chance

of cutting her off before the jawbones were reached was lost: then my father's saying, "Make your adieus; you may not meet her again," put the panic to flight, and I was pressing after Charlotte even within the forbidden precincts of the wood-yard.

To follow her at all was an act of resolution—so much was I a boy still; so strong was my awe of Rab, that to pass that forbidden portal was a deed of daring. Judge, then, my disappointment when, having scaled my Darien peak, no Pacific lay in view. I found myself alone in a large yard, well-clothed and well-ordered, but dreary for want of Charlotte. By the high wall of Dishington's were stalks of winter-washed planks filling the air with a woody flavour. Round the other three sides of the yard ran a broken fringe of sheds and outhouses; in the centre of these, over against me, was the workshop, the saw-pit near it. Above the line of buildings shook the trees of the neighbouring gardens. Beyond them the church tower stood gloomily on the hill, watching the town. Somewhere here without doubt was Charlotte; but where? That question, even more sharply than the failure to find her at once, pulled up my impetuous mood; and I retreated into the nearest shed to plan how to discover her, but first to fashion an excuse with which to meet her when discovered she was.

I was not a moment too soon if I was to escape observation. The sound of a voice in the

yard followed me to my hiding-place immediately I had reached it, and looking out through a sprung seam I saw young Robin Cook upon the ladder rising from the saw-pit. He had turned upon it to address some one below—plainly (though I did not hear the words) in impish badinage. That would have told me that his companion could not be his father, Rab, had there been in my mind any thought save that it must be Charlotte who was there.

Walk to her across the yard, under the eyes of Robin, and under Rab's eyes also it might be, and come plump upon her with my story of following her to say farewell, I dared not; yet set eyes upon her at the least I must. Something told me that the sheds and houses would give one upon the other, and so I found it. Thus I worked my way round the yard like a mole in the dirt and dark, Charlotte the daylight to which I was creeping. Evidently there was some kind of road through all the lumber, had I only had a light to cast upon it; but in the dark, as I was, I found it a trackless wilderness of benches and logs and ropes and barrels, and wheels and spokes slung from the rafters, side by side with floats and anchors. Even by the feel of his hands Mr Shirra's son might have known that there was more here than the wheelwright and wood-sawing business required.

At length, bruised and scratched and torn and dirty all over, I found myself in a more open space, into which

there penetrated a glimmer of day. By it I saw that the way was barred by a wall of wood running right up to the beams of the shed, and then I discovered that the daylight came from over them, and that the roof on the hither side was higher than that under which I stood. I had reached the wheel-wright shed that rose above its neighbours and opened on the yard at the side nearest the saw-pit.

Having stood still for a space, and heard no movement on the other side of the wall, I began to grope along it carefully in search of an exit. Apparently there was none; but at the far end I came upon a ladder, and climbing quietly to the top stepped into a loft that evidently was an upper storey of the workshop. Here there was a window, looking out upon the yard, through which came the daylight that I had seen playing among the open rafters from the shed below, and to this I crept with a noiseless step.

The window, as I had judged, was one in the upper storey of the workshop. Without venturing too close upon it, I could command the whole yard, even the bottom of the pit, and to find no Charlotte there was like a bereavement. The boy Robin was standing now on the plank across the pit, in which a log had been brought into position, and was sawing vigorously; and down in the pit below, keeping time with him on the other end of the saw, was Tam Cornfoot himself. Every pane of glass in

the window was broken, and the east wind sweeping round the yard flung the words they said into the loft where I stood. Tam was calling up to Robin to cease, but the young top-sawyer, with a grin and glow of devilment on his face, kept working briskly, until Tam, all perspiring, and become speechless from want of breath and the crick in his back, was shot up and down on his handle, flinging a look of rage at Robin every time the movement of the saw brought up his face to the light. For a moment, watching the farce, I forgot my search for Charlotte; when suddenly I heard a guffaw close by me, and at the same time a gust of wind swirled in at the window a wisp of strong smoke of tobacco. I slipped into the dim angle of the loft, and stood there listening with my hand on my breath.

"Back from the window!"—I recognised Rab's voice—"and not apprise suspicious folks of your whereabouts! There's one such come in about the town to-day, though he's not of much account. . . . It's well for you we Fifers haven't the noses of you Dutchmen—filling St Brise with your foreign reek!"

The occupants of the adjoining loft, whosoever they were, had drawn back against the partition that separated me from them. I could hear them when they moved, and catch their talk in the intervals of the wind gusts.

"Neither the nose nor the tongue. *Mijn hemel!* Not the tongue!" said a voice un-

familiar to me—a voice of high and hearty timbre. I had a mental picture of the speaker—fair, bold, open-eyed. I never saw him, but I know that the picture was true. He was running on about the dishes he had had at some inn before sailing. The Willem Barendsz was the name of the house, I remember. He went through the dishes with the cooking of each, enjoying them afresh in his recital. Rab was chirruping lowly: it flashed upon me that he also had recollections that he smacked his lips over, and the feast at the Willem Barendsz was honest by comparison with them.

"I have aye observed," I heard him, "that for the interests and pleasures of life that take no effort, commend me to a Dutchman. Yet I maun say this for your race, You can do a power o' fatigue sitting!"

"He!" cries the other, "you have the energy, you Scotch, —though you haven't the taste, as we say. . . ."

The wind swept through the yard again, searching every corner and drowning their words. The wind was rising. Then I caught the stranger's voice again. He was evidently pacing up and down the loft, for his words came to me with a rise and fall. . . . "Restless, restless! I know it myself. Do you know what! When I was a boy in our summer home in Gelderland—it was a nest in the heart of the orchards,—when the wild geese drove above the trees at dusk something out of me went with them. In the blood, Uncle Willem used to say: *Een aap*

die broedt een aap. My mother? Poor *Moeke*! He wasn't thinking of her. My grandfather, Willem Dunlop. Bah! Who knows from what altars, of yesterday or of a thousand generations ago, our natures pluck their fires. . . ."

"You're getting a bit beyond me," laughed Rab.

". . . Well, I was to be settled, secure—a real Dutch aim. My mother was alone, and wished to have me beside her. I was sent to study at Utrecht, where lads grow into scholars as Goes girls become wenches. The bells never rang the quarters high up in the Dom, but the blood in me called out to be let. . . . And sometimes I went to Vlaarding, to Oom Willem's—he wanted me to join him in his business even then. Mother wouldn't hear of it—was ill at ease if I went near him—jealous of each other for me they were. Laughed at her family—old Highland aristocracy, I understand, though died out. Laughed at them, he did. We're the greatest Republicans in Europe, we Dutch—and correspondingly keen on genealogy, though we profess to like it without the noble taint."

"Scotch!" says Rab. "Save that we all claim the noble taint."

"But I went to see him often, and sometimes his tongue was loosened and I was aflame. You remember him—he! With his proverbs, as you say? Old Father Cats! He had a copy of the poet that he used to read from end to end—a folio, as big as the dominie's Bible. It was his Bible, I believe. It's funny

to think of him aye quote-quoting these musty old tags—leading the life he did, . . . and a poet himself, too, when once you thawed him.”

“A poet, with a terrible sense of how many dubbeltjes make a guilder,” says Rab. “Oh! I remember him—that day in Amsterdam, for instance.”

“My first meeting with you—ha! I’ll never forget it . . . I was a boy . . . I’ll never forget it. It was over that damned failure of a speculation—the Lutine. And then you came with me to see my mother.”

“Wonderful woman. How is she?” I could hear Rab.

There was a pause, filled, it seemed to me, with an import—exactly the import for which there was a void in my understanding of this whole story.

Then the other answered with a half-laugh, “I believe she has a grudge against you.”

“Eh!” cries Rab. “Says she ill of me?”

“I never heard her mention your name. Yet so it is, I think. ’Twas you who settled me for a roving life.”

“Me!”

“Oh! I don’t know. She thinks so, I believe. I don’t know. It was in me, of course, and you just . . . just . . . He! Mr Cook, you’re just wonderful.”

There was excitement in his voice. “Speak lower!” Rab cried, yet even as he warned him against discovery, I could hear the chirrup in his voice. The other had stopped in his pacing, facing Rab I could tell.

“And here I am,” he was

saying with bitterness in his voice, “hiding in this hole, mewed, in a game that has ceased to be worth the candle. You know it for yourself. You know this game is played out. Yet where is there a better of its kind? Our Indies? Africa? Who knows? Oh! We have dreams, we Dutch, though you laugh at us for still-sitters. Some day perhaps we’ll hatch out—who knows what? Och! what does it matter . . . whether you rove the world or make a hole in’t for yourself? There was Oom Willem in the end—tied to his stoep with an ague—seventy thousand guilders in his chest, and lamenting there weren’t more. It’s true! Urging me to fresh enterprises to make it a hundred. It’s better perhaps that I settle in the wine business, respectable, and aim—*Goddoorie*—to make it a hundred. Oh! there’s money in it still, and—what would you call them?—perquisites, though you need not risk your skin for them. And we have money. We lost a fortune in that damned gold frigate—but it’s not all gone. Mother’s looking for me still to settle down by her, though she says nothing.”

“Ay,” says Rab. “She says nothing.”

“Huts, man,” he went on, after a minute, “I never bade you quit her. Who finds the world by wandering in it? God’s mercy! What you’ve got to do is to bide at home and bring the world to you. I do that. Oh! It’s difficult—but it can be done. At times it can be done. It’s the idea

that governs. Bide young—keep the idea young—that's the secret of living."

I cannot describe the agitation with which I listened to their words. Although I could not see this stranger, I could be sure he was a man still on the side of youth, and his confession of the unforgetableness of his first encounter with Rab, babbled in Rab's face as I had babbled mine of a similar experience, was a comment on my own relations with the Rascal. It was a gloss upon Rab. It stamped him with the hallmark of the by-ordinary. Here was a foreigner from the other side of the North Sea, and when he spoke of Rab it might have been myself who spoke. My fascination, my doubt, my resentment, even my condescension—they were all in his words. The Rascal, there was no doubt of it, was a world's wonder, not merely mine: a real, big wonder. And I was going to lay my hand on the secret of him. It was that thought which wound

me up to the highest pitch of excitement. The events of the last hour had shaken me: the opening of a new door in life for me, my pursuit of Charlotte in farewell even within the forbidden gates, and now this desperate adventure in which I conceived myself to be engaged. In this fluid condition of spirit I was more than usually sensitive to the meaningfulness of their words. I was on the brink of a discovery; only this thin partition lay between me and it. I was to see the skeleton whose bones rattled in the Cook cupboard; the ghost that filled that household with uneasiness was to reveal itself.

So I imagined. Had I only known it, I was still far off that discovery. The secret of Rab was to be for me as long a pursuit as his law-breaking was for my father. But something told me I was "hot," as the children say, and with all my senses acute with excitement I listened to their wonderful conversation.

CHAPTER XII.—THE WIDOW DUNLOP.

I was "hot," and I listened, and my eyes were wonderfully opened.

In a quarter of an hour I knew more of Rab's smuggling exploits, and the ins and outs of his traffickings, than did my father after a score of years spent in seeking a clue to them. Had my father been in my place in the loft he would have been all ears for the affair that had been planned for this very night, and he would have heard much to

perfect the information which I was carrying from him to Mr Stein in the letter in my pocket. But I... my eyes were fixed upon a bigger picture, the form and glow of which, as I looked, developed through the mystery still veiling it a more integral and cogent story. Among other patches that discovered a fuller meaning for me that day in the wood-loft was the incident of the Mackerel Election and Rab's journey across the North Sea.

Precisely how much of it was made clear to me then, and how much later, I cannot determine. This, at any rate, is the proper place to set down all I know of it, or ever shall know.

When the *Mijntje* of Maas-sluis put into Vlaardingen with the Mackerel fishers, the Provost did not quit the quay, but stepped into a steam smack bound for Leith that very hour. Dunlop found him the ship and the passage. They parted in a wonderfully friendly manner.

"Good-bye, Mr Dunlop," the Provost said. "It is good-bye for good this time."

"Don't say that," Dunlop answered. "In the way of business, it is good-bye, I can understand. But there are some years of the trade for me yet, and we may happen to meet in days to come. Nothing need be said but that our acquaintance was always for pleasure and never for business. I'll not let the monkey out of the sleeve, as you can imagine. I'll not forget that you are the Provost, with a duty to perform."

The Provost laughed.

"But," he said, with a touch of stateliness, and of irony as well, "I'll always remember you, Mr Dunlop, as a particularly frank man," and shook his hand.

"And," said Rab, "I will be at the Provost's elbow, to jog him into going cannily, should he be tempted to perform his duty over assiduously."

"You, Mr Cook," said the Provost testily, "I'm afraid I cannot say good-bye to."

And so they parted.

Two mornings later Dunlop and Rab were together in Amsterdam, and issuing from a tavern on the Sea Dyke ran against a youth, who brought them to a stand.

"Uncle Willem!" he cried.

"Ha! You here, Bolleboos?"

"Yes," answered the youth. "And in all the world you are the man I wish most to meet."

"Hullo!" cried Dunlop. "Made up your mind at last? The old stress of the blood in you?"

"Greater than ever, I think." The youth laughed. "But it's no case of running off to sea this time. I have a scheme."

"Then come in here," said Dunlop, grimly. "If that is your ailment, my friend, Mr Cuick is the very physician for you."

They returned to the tavern, and called for beer.

"A scheme," muttered the Uncle. "Ay! ay!"

"This young nephew o' mine, my brother Dirk's son, suffers from too much of his great-grandfather," he said to Rab; and in turn introduced Rab to the nephew—"Mr Rab Cuick, of the town of St Brise, in Scotland."

Rab's eye was bright.

"Here on business?" said the youth.

"Partly, and partly to defeat other folks' business. I, too"—Rab laughed—"I am troubled with the same complaint as yourself."

"You know of my great-grandfather, Willem Dunlop? Some connection, maybe?"

"Only from your Uncle's lips here, and not very much from them. No—no connection, I

think," he chirruped lowly. "Save only that the old Adam or the old Willem—it's all one."

The youth looked at him sharply, and they laughed into each other's eyes. The elder Dunlop had already begun to expand the tale of this wonderful grandfather of his. "You've started him," whispered the lad, with a rueful shrug of the shoulders, and he and Rab raised their glasses silently across his Uncle's words.

Willem Dunlop (so his story ran) was a mariner of Dundee, a fine skipper, and the cleverest smuggler that ever cut across the Channel. On the 9th of July, the year 1766, the day the fifth Stadhouder came to office, he sailed in the Unicorn, 200 tons, out of Flushing with a cargo of wood for Montrose, and a thousand half-ankers of Schiedam for a port on the road. Three days out, he was wrecked at the back of the Texel: the bones of sailors toss as thick there as the plovers in the polders. But Willem Dunlop sleeps sound at Veere, where the Scheldt has a tryst with the North Sea. How he escaped is a mystery, save that he was a man of hellish spirit, and God is good to the devil's own. He was flung among the dunes at Cocksdorp, and for six weeks lay at a sheep-farm there, mending a broken leg and revolving his broken fortunes. When he got on his feet, he set his face south. He was a man of energy, but he couldn't squeeze the Texel folk—they are the driest of their kind. Besides, during these mending days, when ly-

ing with restless eyes on the sand-hills and his ill-fortune, and confident of the sea and success beyond, the sea no surer than success, he planned a wide adventure for his life, and the pivot of it was the widow Van Loon. He had met her first in the marketplace of Middelburg with her man, the wine-seller of Veere, who was then alive; and maybe there were favours bestowed as well as ankers taken on board. So he crossed at Helder and worked his passage in a Schuit to Middelburg, and in three months' time he was at the heart of the widow round whom the wheel of his fortune went spinning. He never set foot in Scotland again, and seldom outside of Zeeland, but when he died four sloops lost a master, and his five sons shared a brave pile of English guineas.

"Tea, chiefly?" asked Rab.

"Tea and Genevas and cognac and cinnamon, all the wealth of the East Indies—a roaring trade with the coast of Sussex, and chiefly with Rye, chiefly with Rye. But principally tea and Genevas. My father has told me that in one year he shipped a quarter of a million pounds of it, and he set up a son in Schiedam to distil Genevas for his English agents. And then there was the Lutine."

"The Lutine!" cried the younger Dunlop.

"Why not?" said his Uncle.

"Well, well," he answered, suddenly excited, and all ears. "Go on. I'll tell you something when you're done."

The lad sat drumming the

table impatiently while his Uncle went on with his story.

"You have heard of the Lutine?" he said, addressing Rab. "She was a frigate of 32 guns—one of the best in Duncan's fleet, and sailed out of Yarmouth Roads one morning in October of 1799, bound for Cuxhaven, with two hundred souls on board and a million of bullion. The same night she was caught in a gale from the N.N.W., driven on a lee-tide upon a bank at the Yzergat, between Terschelling and Vlieland, and sank with every man and her treasure. A million sterling, or more. So they said. Our fishermen salvaged the specie, and our Government—we were at war with you at the time—let them pocket their share. All save two-thirds, which they kept for themselves. There were seven hundred thousand guilders of it minted at Dordrecht. That will show you! My grandfather had a hand in that enterprise, and proposed to put it in deeper, when he was drowned off the Helder, and left his sons his money, and a dream of lifting another million out of the old frigate's hulk. Look you! The very storm that drowned him buried the Lutine under a shifting sand. Clean out of sight. She and her million, happed under the bank. Better she had remained there. . . ."

The lad made a motion to interrupt him, but Dunlop held on, and his nephew fell back on impatient drumming of the table.

"His sons were all sailors, or all in the trade at any rate. Three of them went west. There's not a name better

known between Dunkirk and Roscoff than Piet and Hein Dunlop and the Goldfish and Eagle cutter. My father and another brother carried on the wine business, and had boats sailing to Portingale, and they too made a run now and then, and so did Dirk and I when we succeeded them. . . . Oh! I've seen the signal flashed from the tower of the St Brise house—Mr Adams's. . . . That was in Mr Trail's time, though, not yours. . . ."

"I wonder how that gentleman's faring," murmured Rab.

" . . . And then came another storm and uncovered the Lutine. Dirk followed that will-o'-the-wisp, and wanted me to. '*Nering zonder verstand, Verlies voor de hand,*' said I, but the wine business would no longer please him, and I must buy him out. And then with him it was all salving-companies, and diving-bells, and syndicates of big folks, and deputations to London to plan with Lloyds for dividing the spoils. . . . Spoils that never were found. . . . Never were there to find, most likely. At any rate, once more the sands had shifted over the frigate and hid the place where she lay."

"He! But my father wasn't the fool you think about the Lutine!" young Dirk broke in, crowing.

"No. It lost him fifty thousand guilders off and on, but it found him a wife." Dunlop was speaking bitterly. "She made another man of him. You know what Father Cats says, 'Where love comes in it makes a lamb of a lion.' 'Twas she kept him at home in safe hawk-

ing at fashionable game. . . . This lad's mother is English—or Scotch, is it? It was on one of Dirk's mad visits to Lloyds that he met her."

"Of a good Highland family," said young Dirk, with a touch of heat. "And between her and Oom Willem love's not lost. He thinks she won my father from the sea, and she thinks he'll win me back to it. . . . But, Uncle Willem, you say treasure-trove is folly—look at that!"

He had taken a gold piece from his pocket, and rapped it on the table.

His Uncle looked sharply from it to him.

"Ay!" cried the lad, "and I'll tell you more. The nor'-west gales have cleared the Yzergat again, and the Lutine's found! Found! And that came out of her!"

"Tush!" cried his Uncle. "Still building castles."

"What's a gold piece or two," he went on, but still scrutinising the coin.

"I don't know," Rab intervened, taking the coin from his hand. He span it rapidly on the table. "Many a fortune is built on a bawbee," he said.

"You're my man! A bawbee is——?" cried young Dirk.

"Half of our penny. Worth the five-hundredth part of your louis d'or here."

"I see you know the piece, Mr Ku-Ku-Kuik-Cook is it? Pardon. . . . And let me tell you, Uncle, more have been found—many of them, and Spanish pistoles, besides cannon and shot. . . . Ay, and there are bars of gold and silver to come, Mr Cook.

Look now! There were thirty-one gold bars raised after the wreck, and thirteen of them were numbered. . . . so . . . from 58 to . . ."

The lad had risen, and crossed to the little billiard table. Dunlop laid a hand on Rab's arm. Rab laughed in his face, which clouded with a suspicious scowl. Young Dunlop was back beside them immediately with a lump of coarse chalk, covering the table with figures and letters—the marks on the gold bars. "His father over again: *Een aap die broedt een aap, van uilen komen uilen*," muttered his Uncle. Rab was following Dirk with a show of eagerness, asking an astute question here and there.

"Huts!" cried Dunlop. "I know that it has been proved on paper a hundred times over that there must be near six hundred bars left in the frigate still. But I wouldn't give the Mijntje for all that will ever see the light. . . . Tush, lad. Put these dreams out o' your head. All smoke: and you know what Cats says, 'Leave smoke to princes; content yourself with common fare.' Join me, Dirk. My cellars will be yours, and my boats yours, and the sea is open to you."

"The North Sea," says Rab. "If this treasure's there—and it seems to be there beyond a doubt—the wide world's open to you."

Rab was blowing Dirk's hot enthusiasm over the Lutine into a white heat. He sat glamouring the lad with a talk of millions of guilders lying in the frigate for his lifting. "Money's the key of the world," said he.

Suddenly the elder Dunlop leapt to his feet. "At your tricks, Rab Cuick!" he shouted. "I know them. I know them." Dirk looked up at him in wonder. "Go your own way!"—he turned his back on his nephew, and flung out of the room.

Rab made a little motion with his hand, as if deprecating the display of temper.

"Oh! He'll come all right," said Dirk. He laughed. "He's deep! Most likely he's away seeking news about the find. And it's there. As you say yourself, it's there." He checked his excitement. "But you are left alone," he said politely. "Through me," he added, with a happy smile. "Let me have the honour of entertaining you. Drink coffee with me? After that I'll find him for you." He motioned towards the door. "You'll drink coffee with my mother?"

"Willingly that!" cried Rab, leaping to his feet. There was a light in his eye, and he went down the street at Dirk's side chirruping.

The Widow Dunlop lived in a tall house on the Herren-gracht, to which her son and Rab were admitted upon a long and lofty hall. Along the cool vista of marble and whitewash the eye was led into a garden surrounded by high walls. Madam was at home, the maid had said, and young Dirk led the way to her parlour. It was a little room, *en suite* with the dining-room, and here they found the Widow seated at a table, with a sleek black terrier asleep against her skirt. She

was somewhat beyond middle height, handsome and fair still, though in advanced middle age. The face was proud and composed. There was a pale glow on the cold features in welcoming Dirk; but at sight of the visitor beyond the spark of affection was blown out, and Rab on his part looked into the face she turned upon him with eyes that scarcely hid their excitement.

The maid who had followed them in opened the *porte-brisée*, and announced that coffee was ready.

"You are just in time," his mother said. "And your friend!"

"Mr Cook," Dirk said. "A gentleman whom I met to-day, . . . he is interested in the Lutine. Ah! mother, I've great news for you! And I brought Mr Cook to drink coffee with us, for I thought you would like to meet him. He is from Scotland."

She spoke a word of welcome to Rab, and led the way into the dining-room. They sat down at a little round table, she with her back to the windows, Dirk and Rab facing her in the circle. The maid had not remained to wait on them. The Widow poured out the coffee, her white lace gauntlets flashing delicately over the silver and Delft, as she busied herself with the nice preparations. Dirk meantime was running on in Dutch about the discovery of treasure at the Yzergat. At a word from his mother he stopped. "Pardon me," he said to Rab in English.

"Is it not a mad enter-

prise?" she said, addressing Rab directly for the first time.

"Very likely it is, mem," he answered. "But a daft purpose ballasts venturesome impulses."

His little complacent smile hovered between Dirk and his mother. She took his meaning, and swept the confidence aside. "How did he like their country?" she asked him, hastily.

"Holland?" said he. "'Deed, mem, it's not like ours.

"It's queer, and beautiful, and folks no doubt get attached to it," he continued. "I daursay a body can be happy here — spite o' the damp," he added with a laugh. "But I never knew the beauty of my own country till I left it. Give me the Lomond slopes and the rolling fields clean to the edges, and the den — the den, and the burn linking between its green banks, keeping the denhead houses merry night and day with its sang. . . . I couldn't understand any one changing it for any other in the world."

"I have lived so long out of it," said the Widow, in a tone of quiet defiance, "so long here, that my husband's country has become my own."

"And yet, mem," said Rab, "I can detect a known sound in your voice. . . . You ken Fife?"

Her eyes dropped a moment, but the next she rallied them. "Who has not heard of it?" said she, briskly. "Come you from Fife?"

"Mr Cook has had a mishap — we owe his visit to an accident," Dirk interposed. "You went fishing, did you say?"

"Down by the May," says Rab, his eye still hovering over the Widow.

"Went out fishing, he and a companion, and their boat was swamped, and — and a Maassluis smack rescued them and brought them on here."

"Strange, madam," said Rab, "that it should have brought me straight, as it were, to your door. But the world's small! It's not a place to hide in," he said with a little laugh.

I can imagine that laugh.

"It's like the Lutine," he went on.

"Ay!" said Dirk, catching at a part of his meaning. "Is it not strange that that wreck should be hidden by the sands for years, and discovered by an accident now?"

The Widow quivered at her son's words as at a cruel blow, but she did not flinch. She played the hostess with a steady voice. The meal finished, she rose and led the way into her room. Rab stopped before an ebony bureau, a fine old French piece with marquetry of tortoise-shell. He examined it with a delighted appreciative eye, running a thumb along the inlay. "Braw work!" he said, and looked round him. The room was lofty, and its rich harmonious scheme, light and glowing, and the fine pieces of furniture ordered with so much repose, surprised him into a genuine pleasure.

"Perhaps Mr Cook will have a *borrel*," said Dirk, going into the dining-room. He took a bottle and glasses from a cupboard in the wall, and presently he returned with them. The Widow and Rab were looking

at a picture—a street scene, a Van der Heyden, or so it was claimed. Rab's eye fell on the bottle, and he laughed lowly to himself.

"There!" said Dirk. "Perhaps you will help Mr Cook till I come back."

She crossed to him. "Dirk, you're not leaving us?" she said low, in alarm.

"Why, yes. A moment only—an appointment close by—about the Lutine." He looked at Rab, signalling with his eyes that he would find Dunlop. He took her in his arms and kissed her. "You will entertain Mr Cook against my return. He will be interested in these things." He waved a hand towards the walls. "Besides, it will be pleasant for you to have a talk about your old country."

She bent a cold white face to Rab. "But I am afraid," she said, "that Mr Cook must entertain me. I have forgotten it all."

"I think that maybe I can bring some things to mind," he said, and blanched her face again.

"You must try." And she kissed Dirk an *au revoir*.

A maid was busy clearing away the things in the other room. Dirk had left the sliding-doors ajar.

"You have beautiful things here," said Rab, still moving round the room.

"My husband was a collector of old beautiful things," she answered.

"Old — beautiful things," murmured Rab.

The Widow caught the words. Her hand went to her heart, and a spasm of pain and fright

and fierce anger shot over her face. But Rab was bent over a fire-screen. The sewed-work panel represented De Ruyter as a boy standing at the wheel, and was surmounted by a model of an old Dutch ship of the line in gilt-bronze. Rab was looking at the model appreciatively. As he rose from examining it his eye fell upon the bottle upon the table. She saw, and invited him to help himself.

"I've seen the neighbour to this," he said, pausing in the act of pouring himself out some of the spirits.

"Ah! You know him, then?"

"Who?"

The blood ran into her face in chagrin, but she answered him.

"My brother-in-law. He owns the other."

"Why, yes," he said, looking into her eyes. "Is not he the venturesome impulse that the Lutine maun ballast?"

Again she swept aside the invited confidence.

"Do you make a long stay among us?" she asked him, leading the way to a seat near the window.

"I sail for home to-morrow," he answered her, still standing. "I've found all I was looking for here—more. And now—"

'Hame, hame, hame, hame, fain wad I be;

O hame, hame, hame, to my ain countrie.'"

He was half humming, half speaking the song.

"Ah!" She interrupted him. "And your home?"

"A little port—I daresay you have heard of it—St

Brise. What part do you come from, may I ask?"

"From farther north," she answered, "farther north."

"I come from farther north myself," Rab said, "though my home is in St Brise now. From nearer the heart of the county—a place they call the Bowes.

"You know the Bowes, maybe?" he asked, answering a sharp "Ah!" he had surprised from the woman.

"Long ago," she said, "long ago. In holiday times."

"And your friends?" persisted Rab.

"All dead."

"All dead," said Rab, meditatively. "Maybe," he continued gently, seating himself near her, "maybe you kent the MacNabs?"

"The MacNabs? Yes, I knew them—slightly."

"The MacNabs, in the Den House," he said, looking out of the window.

"Did you know them?"

"Me? No," he said. "Yet one I can mind—a daughter, Mirrin,—she has married a Clephane. A silent woman. But I have heard tell of others. There was a son, Hector MacNab. There was a story about him. I've heard it from Robert Tullis when he was auld and dottered: he was gabby to me, though quiet to most folk. A queer story. It was a queer story, and I am interested in it somewhat for my wife's sake."

"Ah! You are married," said the woman. "Have you children?"

"Four so far," says Rab, still looking out of the window, as if finding something to interest

him there. "Three sons and a daughter. There is one of my sons not christened yet—I maun get home for the christening. I married a Bowes lass. It may be you have heard of her—Charlotte Seton."

He had turned to look at her again.

"Charlotte Seton. Seton was her foster parents' name, Charlotte the name they gave her. After the auld leddy in the Den, I believe. She was a foundling."

If there was a question in her eye, she failed to speak it. "What are you, Mr Cook?" she asked instead.

"What am I?" says Rab, getting to his feet, and standing by the window facing her. "I' faith, that's a difficult question, mem. There are some who say that I'm a tailor who does a bit of smuggling; others, that I'm a smuggler who does a bit of tailoring; and all of them, I believe, honour me with the title of a Rascal. For myself, I should call me a tailor wi' an inquisitive mind.

"Oh, yes," he went on, as if answering some word of hers. "I admit it is hard upon my family. The inquisitive mind is not held in much account in our countryside, and a tailor is held in still less. But we manage, we manage. Charlotte's a woman of a high spirit, which may or may not be accounted for by her ancestry; and I am a man to whom nothing in this world fails of interest."

He had turned away from her again as he spoke, and was looking out of the window. Through the limes bordering the canal he could see Dirk on

the opposite side making for the bridge.

"Here comes the scholar," he said, "who can tell us what ancient poet it was forestalled me in that saying—for you, I take it, born and bred in Scotland, were not nurtured on the classics any more than myself. Yet in my small reading of them I've found a world o' consolation for a troubled and by-ordinar' life—a world o' self-respecting consolation. In Fife they haud by the Bible for comfort. Lord ha' mercy, some o' them find a broken and a contrite heart easy over there. . . . Give me the man—or the woman for that matter—who holds his head up to his own conduct. A tender mouth is for such as were meant to be driven. I take it that as God wouldn't have troubled to create folks just that they might conform to the standards of a wheen of the luckiest among them, so He'll have the highest respect, howsoe'er He maun whup them, for those who take the bit between their teeth and run away. . . . Believe me, mem, *I* have the highest respect for them."

He chuckled at the conjunction; but for the moment she was absorbed in her own thoughts.

"It is not easy to run away from God," she said lowly.

Rab laughed.

"We feel that most when we realise how difficult it is to slip away from our neighbours," he said, holding her with his meaning eye.

"And they have less mercy," she burst out.

"Ho! That's just as it may be," he answered, getting on his feet again. "I have heard o' folk laying stress upon the goodness of God, and His power of opening up a future as He made a past. I don't doubt it. But in the more important work of letting the past be forgotten—in that, I'm thinking, the neighbours have a considerable say. Yet I would beg you to believe that I'm a merciful man. Particularly to them that I have at my mercy," he added with a laugh.

She was white under his cruel words, but her courage did not forsake her. Her son had come back, and was claiming Rab. "If you have finished your talk," he said.

"We have wandered far from Fife," his mother told him, rallying a laugh.

"Deed, madam, on the contrary," said Rab, "I think I've brought you wonderfully back to it."

"A wonderful woman!" cried Rab, as he and Dirk set forth from the house.

"Ha!" said the lad in delight.

"I forgot to inquire of her, in our crack, her maiden name."

"She was a Miss Christian Tullis."

"Thank you."

Rab set off down the street by Dirk's side with that assured and vaunting step which folks observed when he returned to St Brise.

LIFE IN LABRADOR.

MOST authorities, including the 'Encyclopædia Britannica,' have described the Labrador coast as the most desolate on earth. In fact, some one has put it on record as his opinion, that when the Creator had finished making the world, He dumped down the refuse as Labrador. Yet its entire seaboard is dotted with an ever-increasing population. In the north are the Eskimo, numbering some 1600 souls; in the interior roving tribes of Montaignais Indians; and in the south are some 4000 whites and half-breeds, ever growing in numbers, and displacing steadily the aboriginal tribes. These latter are derived partly from Scottish and Norwegian employees of the great Hudson Bay Company, partly from French Canadians, and partly from Newfoundland and foreign sailors who have married and squatted on the coast. Many are of English stock, their ancestors having come out from southern and western England, from Poole or Bristol or Jersey, in the employ of the great trading firms which carried on the Labrador fishery in the early part of the century. Eight months of the year the country is practically cut off from the outside world, its inlets and harbours being blocked with heavy arctic ice. It is then only accessible with dog-sleighs and snow-raquets along the northern shores of the Gulf of St Lawrence. So short is the summer and so

common are frosts at night, that no cereals can be grown in the country at all, no fruit can ripen, no kitchen produce even can be cultivated save at the bottom of the great bays. There are no railways, or even roads, in the country; no artificial assistance to navigation whatever. The survey of the country itself is very scanty, and that of the coast almost non-existent. There is no telegraph yet, though the Canadian Government is now putting up a line to the entrance of the Straits of Belle Isle. There is only one cow, in this country as large as England, France, and Austria put together, and the one horse is at a Canadian lighthouse in the Straits of Belle Isle. There are no sheep, but here and there a goat is kept. Hens are usually kept in the parlour under the settles, and even then, being fed largely on fish *débris*, both they and their eggs are apt to taste "fishy." Trees only grow, even in the valleys and inlets, as far north as the 58th parallel. There is at a place called Hebron a tree planted thirty years ago, which is now only twenty-six inches high. There is neither hotel, prison, workhouse, nor licensed liquor-shop; no theatre, club, or place of public amusement; no factories, mines, or public works. Even that ubiquitous element of communal life, the policeman, is conspicuous by his absence. True, in summer some 20,000

fishermen, women, and children flock to the coast from Newfoundland and Canada, and the invaluable fisheries of cod and salmon are exploited to the full. The water seethes with twine, the harbours reek with drying fish. Casks of rotting cod-liver taint the air at every fishing-stage and on every one of the hundreds of schooners, while even one small seal-oil factory is run, in the Straits of Belle Isle. The custom-house officers then visit us, for we are fully taxed, though without representation. On very rare occasions we borrow a policeman. A priest, parson, minister, colporteur, and doctor now travel the coast, and the larger places get a mail once a fortnight. Most of our people are poor, — very poor, — and many are every spring half, if not wholly, starved. A man with enough flour, tea, and molasses is well off. If he has salt pork and beef, dried peas, rice, oatmeal, sugar, and enough powder and shot to get fresh meat, he is rich. Tinned milk, currants and raisins, and such-like, are the perquisites of the luxurious; while to have cocoa, jam, or dried fruit, a man must be almost indecently wealthy. Potatoes, lettuces, and cabbages will grow in the inlets; but, alas! the people are mostly out on the seaboard fishing at the very time the gardens are capable of cultivation. At the Moravian mission-stations they attempt to grow potatoes. But the brethren are not occupied with fishing, and have time to cover up their potato-beds with night-clothes when they retire to their own. Thus we con-

tent ourselves with turnip-tops, and occasionally rhubarb or mustard and cress. Fortunately the country provides many wild berries, and when one is fortunate enough to be able to afford molasses to preserve these, they add enormously to our dietary, and act as an excellent antidote to scurvy. The best among them is the cloudberry or bake-apple, the bilberry or blueberry, the marsh-berry, the squash-berry, and the ground Hertz berry or blackberry. The most abundant is the small cranberry or partridge-berry. This last and the marsh-berry have the wonderful faculty of ripening all winter under the snow. They are thus the first to greet us in the spring when the snows go, and they form the great attraction which brings so many birds, even small birds, to breed in such an arctic climate. The wild red currant is also abundant, and in places the wild raspberry. As a matter of fact, many of our green leaves are edible also; but the best of them, the common dandelion, is very scarce. It closely resembles spinach when cooked. A plant called Alexanders resembles celery somewhat. Young osier leaves are edible also, and so is the common dock-leaf; but the people are shy of using any of these, chiefly from ignorance of which plant is which. There is good reason to be cautious in eating wild plants, for on one occasion we were called to four women, all of whom had one morning died after drinking tea made from an umbelliferous flower resembling hemlock. They experi-

enced all the classic symptoms described by Socrates. I have myself eaten numbers of the abundant fungi, cooking them as mushrooms; but beyond knowing they were Boleti of sorts, I am unacquainted with their names. The leaves of *Ledum latifolium* and of Bear-berry (*Arctostaphylos Uva-ursi*) are dried and used as Labrador tea by those too poor to obtain the real article. The "capillair" or tea-berry leaves are used in the same way; but personally we prefer hot water to these substitutes.

Such are, roughly, the surroundings of life in Labrador; and it has been frequently asked, Why do men continue to live in such apparently God-forsaken places when "the cities of the plain" in Canada are so near and offer such abundant scope for labour? The answer is *not* that the people cannot leave it. It is always those who are best off who are most loyal to it, and quite a number who have left and earned a more easy living in Canada and Montreal have returned to its isolation and its iron cold. In fact, for the settler, and especially for the visitor, it has many special charms. There is a great fascination in constantly being thrown on one's own resources, and in discovering faculties which we are not conscious of possessing, because we have no need of their services. The newly-thought-of device which has enabled us to accomplish a more successful hunt or fishery brings, together with its actual gains, a pleasure and a stimulus which a mere additional purchase does not bring. Any fresh addition to our home built by one's own hands and one's sons gives a peculiar sense of satisfaction. A new piece of ground successfully reclaimed and cultivated, even if it does not produce the dainties of Covent Garden, yields a special return that even that market cannot afford. For instance, here lives an old Englishman from Devonshire. There he was merely an agricultural labourer at eleven shillings a-week, and with no hope of bettering himself. Here he chose a splendid spot for his house, felled his timber, and built it; commenced his fishing with a boat he built himself; meshed his own nets; reclaimed a small garden; built a winter house in the woods, secure from the sea breeze in the winter; cut himself a "fur path"; made most of his own traps, snares, and deadfalls; saved some money, or "furs" which mean money, married, and had children. His sons followed in his footsteps, and built a small settlement, both for summer on the coast and for winter in the woods. No less than seventy-six grandchildren now live around him. His former kitchen, the room always used on the coast as parlour as well, has had to be doubled and now trebled to accommodate his continuous stream of visitors. A barrel of flour a-week is said to disappear in his house. The table seldom wants fish in summer, trout and seabirds in the spring, and willow grouse and venison in plenty all winter. Unlimited forests round him

afford a blazing log-fire without any stint of fuel; and, while such members of the family as happen to be in after the evening meal smoke their pipes, seated or lying on the generous strong home-made settles enjoying the blaze, made doubly pleasant by the six to ten feet of snow outside, there is always some yarn to tell, some new problem to solve, some piece of work to be done. Indeed, we have almost De Quincey's ideal realised, though we use neither alcohol nor laudanum negus. Say it is Christmas-time. Our house may be twenty miles or more from the sea. There are the traps to tail and tend. Each "path" may be fifty miles or more in extent, and may take three or four days to go round. The trees that have been cut to give a holding for the traps, say from eight to ten feet from the ground, or the mounds built in the marshes to top the snow level, have to be sought, the trap tailed, carefully singed with burnt feathers to take off the smell of man, bait well tied on, and the whole carefully hidden with moss and snow. Tilts have also to be looked to and prepared for accommodation at night; and the whole round must be travelled on home-made raquets of well-steamed birch-wood, and tight-bound sinew or skin of reindeer. If they drove the dogs on the fur paths, it would scare the foxes and other game. At night there are the skins to cure. A gun is always carried on these rounds, as often a grouse or other game is procured. Occasionally a deer is pursued and shot. He must be

paunched and cut up. That which can be carried is added to the already sufficient load. The rest is "scaffolded"—that is, placed in a roughly made scaffold in the trees, to keep it from wolves and foxes and such-like. Occasionally a fox is sighted, or tracked up till sighted, then he is "tolled"; if from a long distance, by a noise made like two fighting crows, or, if near, by a squeak like a mouse in the grass. So clever are some men at this, that a fox has actually pounced on the back of a hunter hidden behind a rocky bank. Perhaps a lynx or bear will be tracked, and the latter dug out and shot. These, of course, hibernate. A friend who had a young live black bear as a pet buried it in November in a barrel under the snow. Twice he dug it up in winter, but it showed no signs of wishing to move, so he permitted it to sleep on till May. White bears not unfrequently come down with the arctic floe-ice, and may be tracked down and shot, though they travel very fast over the snow in spring when the snow is hard. One, which had buried itself in the snow on a cliff-face, foiled its pursuers by continuing to burrow faster than they could dig him out. White bears are more often taken in spring and summer. I have known several captured with leaden jiggers and fishing-lines from a boat, the men keeping the boat rowing steadily away faster than the bear could swim, and finally despatching him with their oars. This summer five men with four boat-hooks and an axe killed

three polar bears. They put their one and only charge of shot in the first, and one man got a bite in the thigh while killing the last.

Besides furring, there are fish nets to be repaired after dark, and new ones netted for next summer, while some of the family may still be on the "outside," where the ice is not yet all "standing," *i.e.*, fixed to the land. Or they may be far out on the edge itself, fishing with nets for seals. These are not the fur-bearing variety; but they furnish us with clothing and soft water-tight boots, which the women most cleverly make for us. They sew the seams with the tendons from the reindeer's back, which thus swell in the water, and keep the boots absolutely tight. These skins are also used for trousers, coats, tent-covers, sleeping-bags, and the Eskimo use them for their kajaks, and oomiaks or women-boats. We, however, prefer light wooden boats.

Seals that are meshed in nets anchored below the water naturally drown; but seals taken in our frame-nets, the twine doors of which are hauled up by a capstan on shore when the seals are seen to enter, have to be clubbed or shot. Then many seals are taken by the process known as "swatching." We travel out on the running ice—*i.e.*, the floe-ice—generally dragging a light boat. On finding a clear piece of water, called a "pond," we build a shelter of ice, called a "gaze." Here one sits and waits till a seal puts up his head, either to blow, or in answer to the judicious "hough,"

"hough," or tolling-call of the hunter. A bullet crashes through his brain, and before he can sink he is harpooned or a leaden jigger is thrown into him. But seals will not often sink after November has come in until the dams have pupped in March, and the herds are going north again in May and June. This is due to the thick coat of fat with which a kindly Providence has endowed them against the rigorous cold. The excellent meat the seals afford must not be forgotten, nor the valuable oil that we derive from their fat. Those men also who remain on the outside sealing get good chances at the ducks. For ducks, geese, guillemots, razor-bills, and countless gulls go south every fall to winter. Oddly enough they always "trim" the shore—that is, pass close over the headlands. This is more especially the case in foggy weather, when they fly very close together, so much so that I have known thirty fat ducks fall at a single discharge. These are scalded and plucked. The feathers fetch us about a shilling a pound, and the bodies are just frozen down (or possibly salted), and will thus keep quite fresh till the following July. It is not uncommon to have a good barrel of frozen ducks to take up to the winter house in the woods. In the north last year some settlers secured many barrels of white grouse in an almost similar way. They were wintering near Cape Chidley, and every September these grouse fly south to Labrador in large numbers. They arrive thoroughly exhausted, and occasionally fall

into the sea. As this year, numbers sometimes alight on a vessel coming out of Hudson Bay Straits, and are easily captured. Venison is, however, the great meat-resource, frozen in winter, dried in summer, though it is not appetising in the latter condition. The tongues, however, are excellent, and a few dozen of these afford welcome change of diet. The reindeer, or caribou rather, is still very plentiful all over Labrador, and is fairly easy to shoot—too easy very often. Only last year a settler about half-way up the coast shot 155 in a week. The skins and tongues he of course made use of; but though the rest was frozen and so preserved, it had largely to be used for dog food. If there is any spare time it can be well used in repairing guns, running bullets, and chopping firewood; while some will employ the greater part of the whole winter sawing boards for boats, houses, or stages, and three men together have more than once completed a fair-sized schooner in that time. A sawpit is erected in some good centre for trees, and the double-handed rip-saw is worked by one man above and one below. The greatest pleasure in winter, however, is generally conceded to be the dog-driving. Every family possesses from three to a dozen dogs, or even more if possible. The best dogs are those which most nearly approach the grey wolf. The real Labrador dog is very like a wolf,—pointed ears, sharp nose, long straight grey hair, and tail always curled over

in a complete circle on the back. A large dog will stand two feet six to the shoulder, and measure six feet from the end of his tail to the nose. He is an extraordinarily interesting animal, and tales of his sagacity, endurance, and devotion would fill a volume. Yet he is so near a wolf that I have known the sluts crossed by wolves, and even pegged out by settlers to attract wolves to their doom. Moreover, I have known a pack of dogs more than once attack and kill a child. The wolves themselves have measured as much as eight feet long to the end of the tail. A pack of wolves will mix with a pack of dogs, and it will be hard to tell the difference. But as the dogs always fight any strange dog, and kill any strange animal, from a mouse to a horse or cow, there is usually a fight before much mixing has taken place. Briefly, here I may say that a good team of dogs will carry a couple of men and their baggage, when it is good going, fifty miles in the day with perfect ease, and we have had eighty miles out of a team on more than one occasion. They will travel up to eight miles an hour with comfort. Yet, of course, in bad going it may take all day to do eight miles, and there are days when no one can move at all. The dogs will eat anything—one another included. That is the worst trouble with them, that even after a hard day's run they will fight all night, and you may find your best dog laid up when you come to start

next morning. Only one dog, however, as a rule is laid up at a time, for the whole team always attacks the first dog down. The food we provide for them is usually seal meat which may have been buried all summer, porpoise, whale, caplin, sculpins, &c. They can exist on corn-meal and cod-liver oil if nothing better is obtainable: cereals are not their food, however, and I have seen my own dogs vastly prefer to dispose of the indiscreet cat that had ventured out of the house I was visiting. An Eskimo dog treats a cat like a pill.

Any more exhilarating sensation than a real fast "randy" with dogs over the hard snow on a bright day in March it is impossible to imagine. Our home-made sleighs or komatiks are shod with whalebone, and are all lashed with thongs. The traces for our dogs we cut from walrus-hide. I may safely say *every one* goes visiting in winter. One of the greatest attractions of our life is the absolute freedom of it. You may settle where you like, and do what you like. You may work when you like, and take what holiday you like. There are no landowners; no walls or railings; no notice-boards for trespassers. There are no hotels in Labrador, and no hotel-bills. Every house offers a shelter to every visitor. Of what other country in the world can this be said? It may be only a shelter and a bed on the floor with no blankets, but still a shelter and a blazing fire. Whatever food the owner possesses he shares with the visitor. Many and many a time have I

known a family itself reduced to dry flour, and short of that. Yet they have received the visitor, and freely given him of their poverty. It is proverbial that a poor man should not build his winter house on the "komatik track."

If anywhere in the world a community of goods on a workable basis exists, I believe it to be in Labrador. If one Eskimo kills a seal he shares it with all hands, and goes hungry himself to-morrow. There is plenty of scope for that noblest of all pleasures and privileges, true charity, in Labrador, and most nobly it is exercised. There is no fear that your gift will be stealthily hurried to the nearest pawnshop and sold to purchase liquor. There is no danger that the motive will be ruined by seeing the deed recorded at the head of a subscription-list, or that any social honour will repay the deed of kindness. If it really is more blessed to give than to receive, then much of that best blessing is obtainable, and is moreover enjoyed, in Labrador. The people take a holiday, not limited to the stereotyped fortnight, but as and when they like, and this delightful custom of welcoming the arriving and speeding the parting guest makes winter, with all its "forty below zero," the best-loved portion of the year. As for our clothing, it is purely utilitarian, and therefore both serviceable and comfortable. In that respect our women are centuries ahead of the old country, and adopted rational costume long before any Lady Harbertons were invented.

But now spring has arrived. The sea is breaking its iron bonds. The salmon will soon be entering the rivers, and we must hasten to carry our beds and bedding, stoves and furniture, nets and guns, dogs and goats, women and children, and other belongings to the salmon posts on the big rivers, or to the entrances of the bays. Some men will now again be netting seals, as far as the exceedingly numerous and troublesome sharks will allow. For these pests will eat every seal out of a net, or at least half of every seal, and occasionally will get caught themselves, sadly tearing and rending the nets in the process. Their enormous carcasses, except for the liver for oil, and some of the meat for dogs, are practically useless. They are the most lethargic of beasts. I have seen them gaffed with boat-hooks as they basked in the sun, and hauled out on the ice with apparently no resistance. Last summer a friend espied the nose of a large one out of water in a northern inlet. Getting into his little flat, he lashed a stout sharp harpoon point to his painter, and sculling quietly out, he drove the barbed point well into the snout. The shark merely turned over and tried to go straight down, with the result that to save the shallop being pulled bow under, my friend had to throw himself into the stern and lean as far out as possible. In this plight the shark slowly towed him down the middle of the deep, and he would probably have been ignominiously drowned

had not a fishing-boat with four men heard his cries and come off to his rescue. He could not swim, and not one of a hundred of our fishermen can either. The temperature of our water is not conducive to bathing, though I have known a man dive to get a seal he had shot.

Now that the salmon-nets are in the water, there is little time for holiday. Every few hours they must be tended, and every hour they must be watched to see that floating ice-pans do not get into them and carry them away. A single pan will do much damage, and one iceberg may ruin a season's fishing; but when the salmon are plentiful and ice keeps clear, it is a sight that makes the heart leap to see those glowing silver beauties coming in over the boat's counter. They do not run to any inordinate size—thirty pounds would be a big fish; but they are splendid eating, and a good catch means all the flour, pork, and molasses we shall need for next year. They are packed in barrels, split and salted, and fetch us about six dollars a quintal or hundredweight. With the usual generosity salmon are never sold singly, and the stranger is always welcome to all he wants to eat. I have seen eighty to one hundred of these salmon taken in one net in a morning. At this season, if nothing else is doing, we may despatch the wife and children to try netting trout in the rivers. For even salt trout in barrels will tell up when we settle up for the season in October. These fish average about four pounds, though they of course run larger. Unlimited

"trouting" and fly-fishing may be enjoyed at this time, but it is looked on as sport for boys, as it is in winter that the boys are sent to catch trout through holes in the ice, or rock codling, or to set snares for the numerous rabbits. But for my part I never tire of "trouting." The fish will rise sometimes as quickly as you can throw your *one fly*, and I have killed a hundredweight and a half after six o'clock in the evening, the fish averaging over 1 lb. apiece. And now, before the salmon have quite done running, the caplin and cod arrive, and just before them the hosts of Newfoundlanders, and our friends from Nova Scotia. Huge seines are shot round solid masses of "fish"—*i.e.*, cod—immense "traps" or submerged rooms of netting are fastened off every headland and likely spot. Boats loaded to the gunwale come staggering to the stages, where splitting, washing, salting, and drying are carried on. These boats first illustrated to me the accident to St Peter's boat, for I have known more than one actually sunk by overloading them from the trap-nets. To avoid this risk, the rule is to carry large netting-bags and enclose all that cannot be taken in at once. These bags of finny prisoners are then fixed to a kedge-anchor, and are left till the boat returns or help arrives. The arrival of the caplin is always an event of great importance. Little larger than a sardine, it comes in countless millions and hurls itself on the beach to spawn. Every land animal, including man, seems to wait its arrival. Every fish

that can endure the temperature of our water seems to follow and devour it. The cod-fish become mere bags of caplin. Seabirds hover over their shoals in thousands, and glut themselves to their hearts' content. Millions are washed up by the sea and left to perish. And yet the spawn at low tide is sometimes knee-deep, and they alone of all our visitors seem not to diminish in numbers. Dried and salted they form an excellent winter food, and dried and not salted dogs feed on them in winter, and men chew them like tobacco.

Now follows the great cod-fishing. The great bulk is caught following the caplin, and they are known as the "caplin school." These are taken in nets; but later on hook and line must be alone relied on, and in this way the fishing holds on till October. After that the cod retire into deeper water, and may still be taken in thirty to forty fathoms. Cod will not live below 32° Fahr., and will not feed below 34° Fahr., so it is said. The temperature of the current on our shores averages from 43° to 45° Fahr. on the surface to 28° Fahr. at the bottom in 100 fathoms of water during the summer-time.

At the close of this fishing only those who have larger boats can really follow up the fish. For often the men find it necessary to go ten miles off from the shore, and with our sudden storms and bitter cold in the Atlantic this becomes impossible unless we have built a stout "jack" or "bully" boat in the winter, and have had canvas, nails, and tar to finish it off.

"Settling-day" is *the* day of the year with the settlers. All our produce is usually sold to Newfoundland merchants, and when they leave for the winter in September or October we "square up," taking our balance in flour, pork, molasses, or suchlike. Alas! most of our people live on that vile system known as "the truck." It means they barter to-morrow's catch for to-day's food. They take salt on credit in June as soon as the Southerners arrive, and generally, alas! also food, nets, and all their outfit as well. In return they send in all their catch, and after that settle up the differences. As they thus have no say in the making of the charges, and as almost all of the settlers are extremely illiterate, however clever they may be at hunting, this is a disastrous method for them. It is necessary that those who have done well should, as far as possible, pay for those who have done badly, and thus prices are apt to range accordingly. Thus thrift and honesty are obviously at a discount, and the sin of Ananias is exceedingly remunerative, if only successful. Many a man who has done well will increase the balance due to him by turning in, as his own, fish belonging to a neighbour, whose debt will never be discharged anyhow, and is thus only increased nominally by this proceeding. While all are tempted to alienate part of their catch from their "suppliers," and sell it or barter it to some other merchant, there are always some such who have a vessel for market only partly loaded, or

who are anxious to quickly send off his "charter," and probably in that way obtain a better price per quintail by arriving earlier, when naturally the demand is greater. This system is our greatest curse. It hurts both supplier and "planter," and only when a cash medium is obtained, and the system of unlimited credit quashed, will real happiness be anyway universally possible. A few small co-operative stores with strictly cash dealings have lately been started as a small effort to counteract the truck, and inaugurate a new era. It remains to be seen whether they will succeed in solving the difficulty. They have done much good already in their immediate vicinities. After all, with all our troubles and uncertainties, the life in Labrador is on the whole a success, while that of an "independent" household is really delightful. Great efforts are now being made to preserve and extend the capacity for reading and writing. Small schools are kept, though often only open a few weeks at a time, as the teachers have to travel from place to place. But it is wonderful how many take an interest in reading nowadays, and how greatly they value the literature which we on this side have laid aside and consecrated to a wastepaper basket. In these days of a yellow press and liberal shoals of extra-specials, and ephemeral literature of all kinds, it is not an unmixed blessing to be a little distant from the fountain-head. The arrival of our post marks ever a red-letter day,

and our trusty, stalwart, unselfish couriers are the friends of every one. I have seen a whole settlement turn out to escort in the mail-man, staggering along on his raquets with "sixty weight" of mail matter. Moreover, some will certainly agree that we may live longer because the "rat-rat" of the telegraph-man never shocks our nervous systems, or the buzzing of the telephone drags us from our meals, or five deliveries a-day leave us a perpetual prey to unfinished correspondence. Moreover, are not our daily avocations considered in Europe recreations, so choice that unlimited money is spent to procure them. And then they are only in the reach of the few. While sport is sport, and more than sport, when so much more than a mere "count" always depends on the size of our bag. In addition, our skill is worth so much more than the mere gratification derived from the approbation of others. For visitors to the coast there are many additional attractions, which one cannot consider exactly as appertaining to the settler's life. There is the romance of cruising along inlets and visiting places where possibly no human foot ever trod. For the artist there are the exquisite and fantastic icebergs, whose unique beauties are so often heightened by the splendid sunrises, magnificent sunsets, or by the colour-plays of the by no means rare aurora borealis. For the antiquary there are the remains of a recent and almost present-day stone age—stone kettles, sauce-pans, knives, arrows, &c., are

to be found in abundance. For the geologist there are problems of ice-movements of uncharted strata. For the sightseer cliffs which rival Norway at its best, and at Cape Mugford certainly quite eclipse the glories of a Geiranger fjord. For the botanist and zoologist there is almost a virgin soil. For the prospector a huge continent, which has not yet yielded the secrets it undoubtedly possesses. Labrador has a waterfall unequalled in the world for height and volume combined. The ethnologist has by no means yet either tabulated its aborigines or recorded its folklore. It may be a barren, bleak, and benighted country, but it has many charms for those who know it, and all I have met who have ever visited it have expressed a keen desire to do so again.

A small hospital, open all the year round, has for some years been in operation on our coast, under the auspices of the Royal National Mission to Deep Sea Fishermen. Thus the painful uncertainty of having any opportunity of obtaining aid for ourselves or loved ones in case of extremity has been removed, and the coast is never left now without any possibility of our sick obtaining skilled assistance. If at last death overtakes us and we are forgotten, it is no harder a lot than most of us could hope for if we lived in a more civilised country; and we expect to sleep quite as peacefully under the shadow of our eternal hills as beneath the blatant headstones of a 6-per-cent necropolis.

W. T. GRENFELL.

WITH THE FLEET AT DELAGOA BAY.

FEW know how much delicate diplomacy was necessary during the early part of the South African struggle to prevent very serious complications arising at Delagoa Bay over the question of contraband of war. Captain W. B. Fisher, who has gained a C.B. for his services in South Africa, was senior naval officer in command of the fleet at Delagoa Bay, and he and his subordinate captains have certainly earned their country's gratitude for having steered their vessels clear of the numerous entanglements which surrounded them.

The seizures of the Bundersrath and Herzog are still fresh in the public memory, and therefore it need not be explained here what a *furor* they occasioned in Germany at the time; but it will perhaps be news to many that the orders to seize them came from headquarters, and was not due to the individual action of the captains concerned. The tact and discretion shown by the officers themselves were almost more than could have been expected of them under the circumstances. Time after time did the agents of the enemy endeavour to embroil the British Government with both France and Germany, by spreading false reports about the arrival of contraband of war at Lorenzo Marquez, but in no case did they succeed in duping any of the British naval captains. Vessels were systematically de-

tained and boarded outside the territorial limits in strict accordance with international law. Where doubts existed a watch was placed on the cargo as it was being disembarked. Searching a vessel's hold at sea could not always be efficiently carried out; and it was frequently necessary to detain a ship several hours to allow the sea to moderate before communication by boat could be established. Even then the boarding officer had often to limit his examination considerably, as it was quite impossible with the vessel rolling about to hoist the whole cargo on deck and inspect it thoroughly. Nor were the ship's papers always to be relied on, for it was no secret that more than one manifest had been doctored. The majority of ships timed their arrival off the entrances of the bay to be just after daylight, but a number put their lights out and tried to run in at night: these latter gave the most trouble, and one or two quite exciting chases took place after them.

It is a notorious fact that up to the commencement of hostilities large consignments of war material had passed through the "open door" of Lorenzo Marquez for the South African Republic, and very early in the struggle it became apparent that some means of stopping this supply through a neutral country must be adopted. Curiously enough, there was abso-

lutely no precedent to act upon, as every previous war of any importance had been between nations possessed of maritime frontiers. The Transvaal, having no outlet to the sea whatever, rendered tactics according to the Naval Prize Law, as hitherto understood, impossible. It was obvious that her Majesty's Government would never consent to contraband of war being carried to the enemy by neutrals through neutral territory; yet it is laid down in Holland's dictum in the Naval Prize Law that the destination of the vessel is conclusive as to the destination of the goods. Naturally, under ordinary conditions of warfare this would be fair enough, as applying equally to both belligerents, but under the exceptional circumstances of the war with the Transvaal it was not to be wondered at that her Majesty's Government refused to allow the enemy's lines of communication to be protected by a neutral Power.

At the commencement of hostilities the cruiser *Magicienne* (senior officer) and the gunboat *Widgeon* were the only vessels at Delagoa Bay, and no addition was made until the end of November, when the *Thetis* arrived from Malta, and the *Forte* came up from Durban. The *Philomel*, *Tartar*, *Raccoon*, *Dwarf*, *Partridge*, *Thrush*, and *Fearless* followed at intervals, until Captain Fisher had eleven vessels under his orders. Of these, three were second-class and four were third-class cruisers, while the remainder were gunboats.

In order to explain clearly the *modus operandi* it is necessary here to give some description of the field of operations. Lorenzo Marquez, the terminus of the Pretoria railway, is situated at the mouth of the Umbelosi river, which flows into Delagoa Bay. The town itself, uninteresting and insignificant, is a hotbed of fever of the most virulent type, and during the war its dirty and squalid streets have been the haunts of the scum of the Boer population. The heat in summer is intense, and no English remain there unless obliged to do so. Opposite the town the river is between one and two miles broad, with an excellent anchorage for vessels of any draught; but outside Reuben Point, at the mouth of the river, there is a bar three miles in extent, which never has a depth exceeding 23 feet, consequently vessels of heavy draught are obliged to anchor some considerable distance from the town. A large liner which was sent up to take away the refugees had to anchor in the middle of the bay nearly ten miles off. Outside the bar the bay is large and commodious; it is twenty miles broad in almost any direction, and the island of Inyack, with its numerous contiguous shoals, runs across its entire frontage, forming a most effective barrier from seaward, and rendering the bay the most magnificent anchorage in the world. It is no exaggeration to say that the combined navies of Europe could anchor in it at the same time in perfect safety. The

island of Inyack, which is adjacent to the southern extremity of the bay, is only a few miles in length, but the shoals which connect it with the north shore are very extensive. Through these shoals there are three channels. The largest and deepest, but least used, owing to the want of buoys and landmarks, is the northern passage, close to what is known as the Cutfield Flats. The middle and most direct entrance, known as the Hope Shoal passage, is a very short and narrow one, but most popular amongst all merchant steamers. The southernmost and most favoured by men-of-war was the Cockburn Channel. To enter this passage it was necessary to pass within territorial limits, but a vessel entering through the Hope Shoals would not be within three miles of the land until after an hour's steaming, when she would be close to the anchorage at Lorenzo Marquez.

At first the procedure was to stop all vessels inside the line of shoals and search them, but against this mode of campaign the Portuguese authorities vigorously protested, and demanded jurisdiction over the whole bay, claiming their rights up to a three-mile limit outside the shoals. In consequence of this it was necessary to considerably augment the squadron, and although the point was never definitely conceded, great caution was observed by all the captains of the fleet in order to avoid wounding the susceptibilities of the Portuguese officials.

Besides the town of Lorenzo Marquez, there were three rivers on the north coast, and Kosi Bay, fifty miles to the southward of Delagoa Bay, which required to be watched. The senior officer, who took his turn at all duties connected with the blockade, established his ships in crescent formation outside the line of shoals, giving each vessel a special stretch of water to patrol. The larger cruisers took their turn inside the harbour, in order to keep the fleet in immediate communication with the Admiral at the Cape. These ships were fitted with the Marconi system of wireless telegraphy, and the naval captain in the harbour was consequently in touch with the other vessels on patrol duty. This means of signalling was of invaluable service, and where sufficient masthead height was allowed, it worked with the utmost precision. Messages between the Forte and Thetis were constantly exchanged at a distance of over forty miles. One of the gunboats was always anchored in the harbour ready for immediate despatch if necessary, and one was constantly employed carrying despatches.

Occasionally vessels got through the patrolling fleet without being boarded, but when they did, it was due to their coming along the coast under the protection of the three-mile limit and sneaking in through the southern entrance. This procedure was a species of slimness that could not be defeated, and had it been generally adopted would have

effectually checkmated the blockade. Nothing could be easier than to strike the coast-line unobserved thirty or forty miles from Delagoa Bay at night, and when once within three miles of the shore all secrecy could be abandoned, and the vessel could gain her port without leaving territorial waters. This dodge was invariably tried and carried out successfully by the vessels of the Chargeurs Réunis line, which sailed under the French flag; and there can be little doubt that some contraband went through by this source. One of the naval captains tried to get the better of one of these Frenchmen one night by a trick which he had practised with some success. His plan was to steam along the line of the three-mile limit at night to the southward, and edge any incoming steamer out by making her port her helm and steer more to seawards. On the occasion in question the lights of a vessel were reported coming up the coast, and the cruiser being close inshore adopted her usual tactics and headed straight along the coast to meet the stranger. The captain told his navigating officer and the officer of the watch to check the ship's position most carefully. Meanwhile the two vessels rapidly approached each other, and seeing that the stranger was not at all inclined to give way the captain asked his lieutenant how far he thought she was off the land. "Just outside the three-mile limit, sir," was the prompt reply. The excitement was in-

tense: both vessels were steering stem on, and in another minute would be within a stone's throw. The whole ship's company were on deck watching with breathless anxiety. "Stand by the gun," sang out the skipper, and turning once more to the navigator, said, "Will you swear she is outside the three-mile limit?" "No, sir, I am afraid I can't," was the answer. "Hard a-port," yelled the captain, and almost before the quartermaster had given the full amount of helm the two vessels rushed past each other, and a war between France and England was happily averted.

The only other foreign vessels which ran regularly throughout the war were the French and German mail-steamers. Although it was never proved that they actually carried contraband to any great extent, yet they openly brought hundreds of mercenaries to swell the enemy's forces. These adventurers arrived wearing the Geneva red cross, which they discarded directly the train carrying them to the Transvaal crossed the Portuguese frontier. Even without the badge they would have been free from molestation, as the prize law distinctly lays down that private individuals travelling at their own expense in neutral vessels, although they may belong to the enemy's forces, cannot be seized. A case bearing on this occurred at the time of the civil war in America, when Messrs Slidell and Mason were taken out of a British vessel called the Trent

by a Yankee naval officer. How Cousin Jonathan had to climb down is a matter of history.¹

The French mail arrived about once a-month, and was brought by the *Geronde*, one of the *Messagerie Maritime* intermediate boats. This vessel connected with the direct line at Madagascar. The enemy's agents never ceased in their endeavours to get her seized. On one occasion it was freely reported that the *Geronde* was bringing a full cargo of contraband, and that the French cruiser *Nielly* had left *Lorenzo Marquez* for the purpose of intercepting her off *Xavora Point* and escorting her into harbour. The British consul informed the senior naval officer of the report, and for a few days the telegraph cables quivered with the exciting messages which traversed their wires. Urgent orders were issued to the captains of the fleet, and steps were taken to meet any contingency that might arise. Fortunately the report was a *canard* circulated by the Boer agents; for the *Nielly*, though she did actually go and intercept the *Geronde*, did so for a perfectly legitimate purpose—namely, to take her own stores from her before she reached the precincts of

the port, in order to avoid difficulties with the Portuguese custom-house authorities. Every time the *Geronde* was in harbour it was on every one's lips how she had been landing large quantities of arms and ammunition at the railway jetty during the night. Men openly stated at the club that they had personally witnessed guns being hoisted out of lighters and placed in the railway trucks. One man, who said he was a refugee from Pretoria, but who was in reality a high Boer official, actually visited the British consul and the senior naval officer in port and informed them both that he had seen six howitzers in Pretoria a few days previously, which were being mounted and put together, having just arrived by rail from Delagoa Bay, to which place they had been shipped in the *Geronde*. He was prepared to swear to his statement. Fortunately the British consul and the naval captain had their own information about the *Geronde's* cargo, and knew it to be quite impossible for her to have landed any howitzers without their knowledge.

These false reports made it extremely difficult for the

¹ The *Trent* was on her way from Havannah to the island of St Thomas in the West Indies, carrying the mails. She had amongst her passengers two Confederate commissioners named Slidell and Mason, and she was stopped and boarded at sea on November 8, 1861, by the United States man-of-war *San Jacinto*, Captain Wilkes, and the commissioners were taken out of her. The news of this high-handed act reached London three weeks later, and a Cabinet Council was immediately called. Lord Lyons, the British Ambassador at Washington, was instructed to demand the immediate release of the prisoners. On December 2 the United States Congress passed a vote of thanks to Captain Wilkes for having made the seizures. On December 27 the United States Government, in response to Lord Lyons' demand, agreed to release both men, and a week later Messrs Slidell and Mason were on their way to England.

naval men to act, and they were rather unfairly condemned by the British residents, and even by the consul himself, for not seizing more vessels. Had the Portuguese custom-house been reliable, there would have been no cause for anxiety about the entrance of contraband, but it was notorious that the officials there were pro-Boer to a man, and therefore could not be trusted. The Portuguese governor-general and his personal staff certainly tried to act in accordance with international law, but being weak individuals they were in the hands of their subordinates. There can be no doubt that till the arrival at Lorenzo Marquez of Captain FitzCrowe, the British consul-general, in the spring of 1900, any villainy might have occurred at the Portuguese custom-house. This astute and far-seeing gentleman at once struck down at the root of the evil, and by his strenuous representations a clean sweep was made, and new and more worthy men were appointed.

Constant, too, were the reports about contraband being landed on the sea-coast and up the adjacent rivers, but this was proved to be almost impossible. Several of our men-of-war were told off to effect communication with the natives at different points, and it was only after great perseverance that they succeeded. They all reported that it was impossible to land stores in any quantity owing to the surf, and some of the ships having landed their men had great difficulty in getting them off again. The cruiser

Forte was sent to Kosi Bay to inquire as to the truth of a rumour that a Boer commando was in the neighbourhood waiting to receive contraband from expected vessels. An interpreter and a signalman were landed in a dinghy, but their boat was swamped as she touched the beach. The natives told them that no Boers were within a hundred miles of the coast, and that no white man had ever landed at Kosi within their recollection. On endeavouring to get these men off to the Forte again, another boat was capsized in the surf, and then Lieutenant Massy Dawson, who was in charge of the boats, finding it impossible to communicate in any other way, gallantly tying a grass-line round his waist, swam two hundred yards through the surf and established a line of communication with the men on shore. The sea was abounding with sharks. A gale of wind sprang up shortly after Mr Massy Dawson had landed, and the captain of the Forte took his ship to sea and left the gallant young officer to spend the night running about the beach with nothing on but a singlet and a pair of socks. Next day the Forte returned, and after some difficulty got all her men off again. The *Magicienne* had a somewhat similar experience, only her officers and men were unable to return to their ships for several days, and Captain Fisher nearly gave it up as a bad job. It was here, a few months later, during some further endeavours to land men, that Lieutenant Leckie

of H.M.S. Widgeon won his Albert medal for saving the lives of two troopers who were capsized in the surf. Considering the difficulties our naval officers encountered and only overcame after much risk of life and hardship, it can scarcely be accepted that the Boers or any of their confederates would have even attempted to land contraband on the coast. It would have been possible certainly to enter the Limpopo river in very small vessels, but this river was constantly watched, and nothing of a suspicious nature even was observed.

When the Boer forces were beginning to feel the effect of the blockade, and could not get what they wanted from Europe, some desperadoes were sent down to Lorenzo Marquez to endeavour to blow up one of her Majesty's ships. There were four men concerned in this despicable plot, and they were known and most carefully watched by the British consular secret agents. Owing to their want of technical knowledge as seamen and torpedoists, and to the alertness of the officers and men of the fleet, they were unable to carry out their scheme. Their only chance of success being at night, Captain Fisher carefully avoided giving them the opportunity they desired, and orders were issued that none but the small gunboats were ever to be in the harbour after dark. These little craft were more able to take care of themselves than the bigger vessels, and by putting out all their lights were not noticeable after dark. It was absolutely necessary to keep

one of the squadron in the harbour all night in case of an attack on the Consulate, which was threatened on more than one occasion.

After the arrival of the Guards at Koomati Poort, Lorenzo Marquez was overrun with the enemy. The worst of these were the so-called Irish Brigade, who at the first sound of British cannon near Koomati took to their heels and bolted, leaving their rifles and ammunition behind them. They gave the Portuguese so much trouble that the governor-general had them all arrested and sent off to a transport in the river, where they were detained until a vessel was ready to take them to Europe. About the same period the town was honoured by a visit from Mr Paul Kruger. He also came down somewhat hastily, and at first took up his residence with Mr Potts, but owing to that gentleman's questionable reputation, the governor-general had the ex-President removed to the house of the district governor, where he remained during his sojourn in Portuguese territory. This house was situated near the public road, and the old gentleman could be plainly seen every afternoon by all passers-by, as he sat in the verandah smoking his long pipe. The captains of the fleet in their walks abroad cast longing eyes at his person, but his arrest was impossible either by sea or by land. Not only would it have been contrary to international law to take him, but it was very broadly hinted that he was to be allowed to go. His capture would have only added to the

country's difficulties. It was evident that he did not know of this himself, as his embarkation took place before sunrise one morning in a small boat, when he was taken off to the Dutch cruiser *Gelderland*.

The lying rumours and reports with which the naval captains had to deal, and which, if acted upon injudiciously, would have most certainly involved their country in a European war, were not the only difficulties which had to be contended with. The survey of Delagoa Bay reminded one of the Bellman's chart, "a perfect and absolute blank." The coast-line was put in certainly, but any attempt at cross-bearings was absolutely futile. The buoys laid down by the Portuguese were as much to be depended upon as derelict vessels drifting about the ocean. The only reliable mark to go by was the lighthouse, and it is greatly to the credit of the officers responsible for the navigation of Captain Fisher's squadron that, notwithstanding the hundreds of times they guided their ships through the intricate channels outside Lorenzo Marquez at every hour of the day and night, and under every condition of weather, not one of the squadron ever ran on shore, and no pilot was ever employed. It is true that there were some close shaves, for it would have been difficult sometimes to have passed a sheet of paper between the mud and the keel of more than one cruiser, but no accident whatever occurred to necessitate one of the ships going into dock. Many a time in passing through

these shoals at night the hearts of the officers on the bridge almost stopped beating with anxiety, but a merciful Providence carried them through their dangers in safety.

Although the actual amount of contraband seized by the navy did not reach any great extent, the moral effect of Captain Fisher's squadron was of incalculable value. During the first six weeks of hostilities the arrivals of ships at Lorenzo Marquez were ten times greater than they were in the following December; while during the spring of 1900, with the exception of the regular mail-steamers, none but British vessels ever came near the harbour. A very different state of affairs to this would have taken place had it not been for the navy; for besides the unlimited supply of contraband which would have found its way into the Transvaal, there is no knowing how far the local Portuguese officials might have been tempted to go in order to favour their friends across the border.

The arrival of the British troops at Koomati Poort practically put an end to the blockade, and many of the ships of war were speedily withdrawn. It was with no feelings of regret that their captains took them to sea and saw the lighthouse on Inyack island disappearing on the horizon far astern, knowing that their anxieties were at last over, and that the rocks and shoals around Delagoa Bay would know them no more.

MUSINGS WITHOUT METHOD.

THE NEED OF EFFICIENCY—THE APPOINTMENT OF SIR REDVERS BULLER—
THE PRESS AND THE ARMY—SIR REDVERS CONDEMNED IN DESPATCHES
—THE EVIDENCE OF HIS OWN SPEECH—THE GOVERNMENT MORE
BLAMEWORTHY THAN THE GENERAL—THE TIMIDITY OF OUR MINISTERS
—THE RELATION OF PARLIAMENT TO THE COUNTRY—THE NEW TRANS-
LATION OF TOLSTOI—THE EDINBURGH FOLIO.

THE one lesson of the war is the need of efficiency—in men, in arms, in generalship. Before all parties, before all policies, stands the imperative duty of Army reform. We must lack nothing which shall protect our colonies and, in the last resort, defend our own shores. Neither false economy nor private pique can be allowed to interfere with the safeguard of our country. What matters it that we pack our Treasury and flatter all our general officers to amiability if, with the enemy at our door, the defences of England are not perfect? It boots little that a large surplus is there to be given the invader; it boots less that the keys of London are surrendered by a soldier, who has no fault to find with the War Office. No matter what the cost be in money and temper, the Army must be reformed; and the country which has given the present Government a free hand will be content with nothing less than efficiency.

At the beginning of last session the Government was rich in promises. A Royal Commission, most wisely chosen, was appointed to examine the working of the War Office.

Its suggestions were admirable, and worthy the men of business who made them; but a Royal Commission is little better than a conscience-soother, and we shall be better satisfied when the suggestions are duly applied. Nor was Mr Brodrick idle: he brought forward a scheme, adversely criticised it is true, but a scheme, nevertheless, which shone with one ray of hope. No general, it was promised, should be appointed to the command of an army corps in time of peace who was not fit to command in time of war. Here, at least, was a guarantee that, if we were ever called upon to take the field, our commanding officers would not merely be competent, but would be linked to the Army by the bond of familiar sympathy. And among the first generals appointed to the command of an army corps were Sir Redvers Buller and Sir Evelyn Wood.

As a masterpiece of cynicism this could hardly be outdone. Almost a year ago Sir Redvers returned from Africa with more than one black mark against his name in despatches; and even if Sir Evelyn were not afflicted by deafness, he is not the

officer who above all others commands the confidence of the Army. The reason of the appointments is profoundly mysterious; but whatever it may be, it is a reason wholly unconnected with military efficiency. Probably it will be said in defence that these two generals have been chosen to stop a gap; that as the pick of our officers are still in South Africa with the army corps, it does not matter very much who command at home, provided that they have a fair knowledge of the War Office. It may be argued that for some time to come the chief duty of Sir R. Buller and Sir E. Wood will be to despatch fresh drafts from Aldershot and Salisbury, and that until the Army comes back, its reorganisation is impossible. Now this excuse is sound in its way. If Sir Redvers and Sir Evelyn are mere stop-gaps, it matters little. If there are no army corps, perhaps it is immaterial who commands them. But Mr Brodrick has not offered this explanation, and his statement leaves us no room to doubt that if we went to war to-morrow the two army corps would be commanded by Sir Redvers Buller and Sir Evelyn Wood. Now, in the speech incautiously delivered by Sir Redvers Buller some weeks since, he complained, very properly, of inexpert criticism. He declared with absolute truth that the Press had not given the Army fairplay,—that it had blamed the slightest incident which looked like a failure, without adequate knowledge of the officer's intention or diffi-

culty. The effect of such criticism upon the officers in command is obvious: if the loss of a dozen men is to be described as a crime in the newspapers, the bravest officer may be forgiven if now and again he is beset by timidity. "If I sacrifice a handful of men," says he to himself, "I gain a certain advantage; on the other hand I am held up to ridicule, as Gough was held up, by ignorant critics." The answer to this is simple: a British officer is so far superior to the Press that its criticism cannot and should not touch him. He has no more to do than obey orders, and serve his country in the best way possible. At any rate, he need admit no journal within his quarters, and can show himself resolutely indifferent to an irresponsible judgment. That the critics have prolonged the war is quite possible; but it may be remembered that the blame-worthy critics have not all been civilians. We have heard of generals, fresh from the dust and heat of the campaign, delivering harangues; and until the War Office imposes a dignified silence upon all officers, it cannot check the chatter of Fleet Street.

But the Press, in censuring the appointment of Sir Redvers Buller, did not criticise him. It merely accepted the criticisms of the Commander-in-Chief, which are beyond cavil, and declared that, in the face of these criticisms, Sir Redvers was not fit to command an army corps. The facts, in brief, are not disputed; but the conclusion, which the Government

refused to draw was perforce drawn by the journalists, with a restraint and dignity highly creditable to their profession. It should not have been left to them to perform this arduous and delicate duty. But no sooner had Sir Redvers been appointed than a public protest was necessary, unless the professions of the War Office were rashly made and idly understood.

Now, there are two episodes in the career of Sir Redvers Buller, duly censured by the Commander-in-Chief, which render him unfit for a high command.¹ The famous despatch now printed in the Blue-Book is familiar to all, yet our readers may once more be reminded of its terms. "On the 6th of February," writes the Field-Marshal, Lord Roberts, "I received a telegram from Sir Redvers Buller, reporting that he had pierced the enemy's line, and could hold the hill which divided their position; but that to drive back the enemy on either flank, and thus give his own artillery access to the Ladysmith plain, ten miles from Sir George White's position, would cost him from 2000 to 3000 men, and success was doubtful. General Buller inquired if I thought that the chance of relieving Ladysmith was worth such a risk. On the same day I replied that Ladysmith must be relieved, even at the cost anticipated. I urged Sir Red-

vers Buller to persevere, and desired him to point out to his troops that the honour of the Empire was in their hands, and to assure them that I had no doubt whatever of their being successful." But despite the clear order and the splendid encouragement, Sir Redvers decided to make no attack, and to take the honour of the Empire out of their hands. "I withdrew my men," said he, "because I thought that they could not get through; and I would not lose a man unless I could get something for it." Yet the same man now declares that, in the present situation of affairs, "every single man who risks men and loses men, so long as he kills one Boer, ought to be praised by the Press, and not blamed." That is true to-day, but never at any time was the necessity of striking a brave and reckless blow greater than it was before Ladysmith. "Ladysmith must be relieved, even at the cost anticipated"—such is the unmistakable declaration of Lord Roberts; and it is difficult to understand how General Buller shrank from the execution of so definite an order. Inside Ladysmith 10,000 troops were shut up, and Sir Redvers hesitated to risk 2000 or 3000 for their relief. But inaction was not his worst fault. So certain was he that the beleaguered garrison could not hold out, that he "spatchcocked" a sentence into a telegram addressed to Sir

¹ As we go to press it is officially announced that the Commander-in-Chief has recommended that Sir Redvers Buller be relieved of his command, and that he has been placed on half-pay.

George White, suggesting that it might be necessary to destroy his cipher, disable his guns, and surrender with all his troops. It is not pleasant to think upon, and even though Sir George White did not take the chance offered by the "spatchcocked" sentence, we cannot contemplate without despair what the result might have been had Sir Redvers Buller conducted the operations after his own guise; nor can we accept it as a proof of reckless courage that he "had in his pocket the very telegram in which he was ordered to do something which would have involved the loss of 2000 or 3000 men."

But it was not at Colenso alone that General Buller sank before the great opportunity. The blunder of Spion Kop is still unexplained, and again we have Lord Roberts's criticism on which to rely. Sir Charles Warren, we are told, did not visit Spion Kop during the afternoon or evening; but "whatever faults Sir Charles Warren may have committed"—we quote Lord Roberts's own words—"the failure must also be ascribed to the disinclination of the officer in supreme command to exert his authority and see that what he thought best was done." With this criticism in our minds—and it is not the criticism of an inexperienced journalist—we cannot confidently intrust the first army corps to Sir Redvers Buller. No officer ever led his men to victory who did not insist upon the supreme command, and who did not see that that was done which he

thought best. In brief, the publication of the papers relating to Spion Kop finally shook the authority of General Buller, and either they should have been suppressed or Sir Redvers should not have been invited to a command.

But as though the despatches of Lord Roberts were insufficient, Sir Redvers Buller must needs make a speech, the lamentable indiscretion of which is a still more damaging criticism. We can say nothing kinder of it than that it brings to our mind the Dreyfus case, with its absurd array of spies and veiled ladies. Last February Sir Redvers received a letter from a personage more mysterious than respectable, whom he describes as an "international detective." An old man he was, and he had been "at the game all his life." For some reason which does not appear, he visited Sir Redvers at Aldershot, where he told him many curious stories, and finally revealed the existence of a plot whose invention was worthy the great Paty du Clam. "'Look here,' said the mysterious stranger; 'you have enough money to live on; give up the Aldershot command.' I said, 'Thank you very much, but I do not know that I need.' I asked why, and he answered, 'You have got enemies—not exactly enemies, but men who mean to get you out of the way, and they will do so. You had better get out of the way quietly and happily.'" The incident of the international spy is merely grotesque, but it is interesting because it proves that Sir Redvers Buller has

but a rudimentary knowledge of human nature. Now, a general must before all things be a student of men; he must understand intuitively the temper and talent of the opponents whom he meets in the field. Of two generals he is more likely to win the victory who sees the strength and weakness of his enemy's character, for it is this knowledge of character which enables a soldier to anticipate what his antagonist will do, and to provide for it. But how shall we call him a profound student of men who is not ashamed to avow his belief in "international spies," and to charge the 'Times' and 'Spectator' with conspiracy?

Sir Redvers Buller, then, lacks a knowledge of mankind. He lacks also the humour which generally accompanies that knowledge; but he proves his inefficiency also by his style. To compare his despatches with the despatches of Lord Roberts is to realise the difference between a soldier and a sentimentalist. Whatever crimes the journalists committed were matched by General Buller's amazing messages. He sent no word home that was not a fear or a regret. The temper of the people did not expect an apology: whatever news Sir Redvers had to give us would have been received with courage and resolution. Yet General Buller's despatches deserved no other epithet than "whinings," the epithet which Wellington used contemptuously of his generals in the Peninsula. But undignified as are his despatches, in the speech de-

livered recently at the Queen's Hall Sir Redvers gave a yet looser rein to his fancy. He ascribed his failure at Colenso to rank bad luck. "It was the hottest day of the whole year," he says, "and I had rank bad luck. I still believe, and hope to show later on, that if I had not had bad luck I had enough men to get in." Now, a general's business is to control his luck—what is good luck but foresight?—or to forget it. To bring it forward months after as an excuse is enough to wear down the proudest confidence, since nothing weakens a leader's influence so speedily as the confession that fortune fights not on his side. But it is not so much the substance of this statement, though that is bad enough, to which we object. It is the jaunty method of speech. Still more improper is the use of "spatchcocked," especially on an occasion of stern solemnity. If a man's style corresponds even remotely with his feeling and temperament, so grave a story as that of Sir Redvers Buller's telegram should have been told with simple dignity. Yet, facing the reporters, he chattered of sieges and battles, upon whose conduct depended the fate of the Empire, in the off-hand slangy style of the Club smoking-room, and we are glad to think that our annals do not show a worse example of official flippancy.

Sir Redvers Buller, therefore, not only by the verdict of the Commander-in-Chief but by his own confession, is not the best general whom the War Office

could have appointed to the command of the First Army Corps; but it is not General Buller's fault that an injustice has been done to the country. The appointment was not of his making, and we cannot reproach any man with accepting an office higher than his talent warrants. The Government is wholly and solely culpable. Mr Brodrick has no need to flatter or conciliate any one. It is not his business to find out which course it is easiest to pursue; he has but one simple duty: to ensure that the Empire is invulnerable within and without. That which in a private citizen is an amiable virtue becomes in a public servant the worst of crimes. It was no doubt agreeable to the War Office to give Sir Redvers a kind of consolation prize, and to see that the distribution of rewards left no one disappointed. But the disappointment of one general or of ten is nothing compared to the safety of the country, to guard which is the army's only function. But deplorable as seems Mr Brodrick's action from this point of view, it is yet more deplorable because it is a symptom of a prevailing disease. The present Government unhappily suffers from a disease which is without cause, and would we could say without effect! On paper the strongest Government of modern times, it is paralysed by a weakness which has rendered it almost inactive. With a safe majority at its back, it fumbles feebly at the passage of its own measures, as though

it were anxious not to express its own assured view, but to conciliate the whims of the minority. And this weakness is more blameworthy because the Government holds, and could retain if it would, the complete confidence of the country.

The opinion expressed at the last General Election was unmistakable. The people proved by its vote that it wanted a vigorous policy, and that it was ready to pay for it. The Government had nothing to do but to turn its eyes away from the constituencies, and to conduct the affairs of the country in a spirit of large enthusiasm and determined courage. It would only have gained by acting upon its own responsibility, for if popular government means anything at all, it means a free and frank delegation of authority. The people can do no more than indicate the men who, it desires, shall be its governors. Even if it knows what reform is necessary, it must leave the work of initiation and design to the Government; and the Government for its part must have the courage to do what it thinks right, without consulting the country more often than the conditions of political life compel it. Lord Rosebery, in a speech delivered at Birmingham, declared that if reforms are wanted the nation must lead in them; but this is to mistake the relations which bind the Government to the people. A statesman is something better than a vestryman. Satisfied with the general

confidence of his constituents, he is free to plan and carry into effect whatever measures seem good to him: indeed the statesman of genius need remember those to whom he owes his power only when he goes down to solicit their votes. To throw back responsibility on the people which deposes it is in a statesman the supreme act of cowardice, as well as a plain guarantee of inefficiency. Yet a shrinking from authority is the gravest fault of the present Government: bitten with the desire to please, and amiably to flatter the last suppliant, it has ended in displeasing even its own friends. Nor can we explain the constant interest which the Government, defying the traditions of its party, takes in the opinion of the country, unless it be the influence of Birmingham.

Mrs Garnett has already displayed her skill in the translation of Turgenev; but her version of Tolstoi, of which 'Anna Karenin' (London: Heinemann & Co.), the first instalment, has been published, is a far more difficult project. Whether the style of Tolstoi be more complicated than that of Turgenev we know not, but surely Mrs Garnett's later work is far more closely involved than her former. None the less we are exceedingly grateful to her, since she has given us for the first time the complete and workmanlike version of a masterpiece, and has afforded us a chance to renew our acquaintance with the greatest novelist of the age.

It is a commonplace that the most of men have a dual nature, but no one ever lived two lives so distantly separate as those which have made Count Tolstoi famous. On the one hand he is an artist, on the other he is a fanatic. The present generation knows him best as a preacher of impossible dogmas, as a pietist who deems reunciation the first and last duty of man, and who looks with a kind of guilty regret upon the brilliant works of earlier years. It is unlikely that his gospel will ever be more than the sport of cranks and interviewers. The excellence of manual labour, a favourite article of his faith, is disputed by no one, while his communism has been tried and has failed too often to be of interest or importance. But the very simplicity of his fanaticism would be engaging, if it had not been made common by the newspapers; for Count Tolstoi is that rarest of creatures—a fanatic who has lived. If he believes to-day that a primitive life is best for us all, he has arrived at that belief by proving to his own satisfaction that most other lives are unsatisfying. He is a noble, he has great estates, he has served in a distinguished regiment; yet he now sees no beauty save in the life of the peasants who till the soil, who sow the grain, and who reap the harvest. But his fanaticism will pass and be forgotten with other systems of the same kind; his masterpieces of fiction will guard their niche in the temple of fame for all time.

To attach him to this school

or that would be an impertinence, since, indeed, he seems to have fashioned his own method. For such mechanical contrivances as the novelists call plot or construction you will look in vain in his pages. He is not a professed psychologist, though he pierces deeper than most into human character. He makes no claim to realism, though he is always closer to the truth than the rhapsodical M. Zola. But he exhibits the characters of his personages as much in deed as in thought; he does not analyse their motives as does Turgenev; he prefers that their qualities, either good or evil, should be displayed in action. For this reason he packs his canvas full of figures. He attains his effects by a mass of details introduced into a vast space. Some of them, at a first reading, may seem superfluous; but there are few which do not add a new touch to the portrait, or show a character in a new light before his friends or foes. And it is this method which creates the impression of realism. In reading such works as 'Anna Karenin' or 'Peace and War' you seem to be confronted not by fiction but by life. There are no jerky "curtains" to disturb the illusion; the chapters do not end upon a note of interrogation, designed to force the interest on to another page. The plot develops itself as does life, simply, inevitably, and without accent; and in accord with this simplicity the characters are rarely either above or below the stature of men. That is to say, he deals neither

with giants nor pigmies. His characters are not grotesquely sombre, like Dostoievsky's; nor grotesquely humorous, like the characters of Dickens. They are, indeed, merely the men and women that he has encountered in his career—nobles and peasants, statesmen, sportsmen, and soldiers. And here we may note the result of an aristocratic prejudice: for him the great middle class does not exist. Even the lawyer in 'Anna Karenin' is not treated quite seriously; when he is not enunciating foolish platitudes in a pompous style, he is catching moths to save his rep curtains.

But with this limitation Tolstoi knows the world of Russia intimately, and he pictures it with a philosophic calm and impartiality which should belong to the perfect realist. But his books have no construction, the critic may object. Nor has Life; and though you might leave out half of 'Peace and War,' or 'Anna Karenin,' without destroying its meaning, there is still more in Life, at whose significance we cannot guess. Again objects the critic, the artist should select no more than is useful to his purpose. But Tolstoi only differs from other novelists in that he selects with a more generous hand. He is no symbolist attempting to represent the world in a blade of grass; rather he sets Life impartially before you, and leaves you to draw your own conclusions.

But there is one limit even to Tolstoi's impartiality. Though he holds the scales of justice

with an even hand, though he looks with hatred upon none of his personages, though even Karenin in his eyes (and in ours) is redeemed from contempt, he is still partial where he himself is concerned. In other words, he cannot keep himself out of his books, and in some subtle fashion lets you know when fiction turns to autobiography. There is little doubt that in the vacillant, magnanimous, simple-hearted Levin he is drawing his own character, not with any slavish accuracy in fact, but with a perfect fidelity to thought. The actions of Levin may not have been Tolstoi's; the opinions of the two men (one is sure) are always identical. So, too, we detect the author in the valiant Peter, a hero in the heroic 'Peace and War.' But while these resemblances are intuitive, as it were, the student may judge how much Tolstoi borrowed from his own experience, if he will study his 'Memoirs,' and compare their incidents with the incidents of his two great romances. To give an impression of his gallery would be impossible, but surely no artist ever boasted so noble an array of portraits. Prince Andry is the noblest gentleman known to fiction, and though only the greatest hand can draw a gentleman, it is not only by this supreme test that Tolstoi excels: he has depicted gamblers and men about town with a clairvoyant sympathy which can come of experience alone. His Cossacks are living heroes; and Turgenev, with all his sympathy with young

Russia, never saw so deep into the peasant's mind as Tolstoi. He has unfolded war with all its accessories of splendour, courage, and passion in a grandiose panorama. In 'Ivan Iliitch' he has softened by his art the common, hopeless horror of death; and he has done all this with so deep a knowledge of human nature, with so fine a sympathy with human weakness, that he can rank only with the great ones of the earth. Such is Tolstoi the artist, and as for Tolstoi the fanatic, we may leave him to other fanatics who, not having his genius, are proud to ape his folly. But all the fanaticism in the world cannot recall or abolish a published masterpiece, and not even the indecent folly of the 'Kreutzer Sonata' can dim the brilliancy of 'Peace and War.'

Tolstoi stands almost alone in Europe. The craftsman seldom considers what is due to the craft which he is privileged to practise. There is, in fact, a lamentable dearth of artists; but in this general dearth it is pleasant to note that one simple art—the art of printing—still survives. Nor is the last example of this delicate handicraft the least admirable. To Edinburgh, the home of many masterpieces, we owe also the new Shakespeare, edited by Mr Henley, which Mr Grant Richards is publishing; and we doubt whether even the press of Messrs Constable has ever more beautifully accommodated its means to its end. One part only—'The

Tempest'—is before us; but from this exquisite specimen we can estimate how great will be the beauty of the whole work. In form it is a small folio, and has something of the feeling which distinguished the noble tomes of the Elizabethan age. In other words, its chief merit is perfect simplicity. It is neither fantastic nor retrograde. It has no Gothicism to offend the taste or blind the eye. The page is beautifully spaced, and never crowded. The strong headline alone attracts the reader; and Messrs Constable have solved a very difficult problem: they have printed a play, and yet so disposed the names of the characters and the numbers of the scenes as to make no spots dance before the vision. The highest praise we can give to such a book as this is that it hands on the old tradition of the printers' art; it is worthy to rank with the books designed by such masters of their craft as Aldus, Elzevir, Plantin, and Baskerville. Like the books which came from the presses of these famous men, it is no mere ornament of the library, no mere sport for the bears and bulls of the book-market. It is above all a book to read, and

happy the reader who can possess his Shakespeare in this dignified and comely shape.

The text is as simply and wisely composed as the printer's page. The first folio, in Mr Henley's phrase "the greatest gift ever made to English letters," is followed with admirable loyalty, as its manifest authority demands. Now, Shakespeare, if in truth he was not careless of his literary reputation, was interrupted by death from revising his own proofs, and the work was done after his own copies, but with a lamentable inaccuracy of detail; so that the text of Heminge and Cundell, though it professes to offer to the view the poet's plays, "cured and perfect of their limbs," is by no means the freest from trivial errors. In other words, it is of the highest authority, but not of the severest correction. Mr Henley, therefore, has not hesitated to remove obvious errors, to accept such variants as seem good to him, and himself to propose more than one happy emendation. From every point of view, then, we recommend the new Shakespeare, which should appeal equally to the textual critic and to the amateur of noble books.

BLACKWOOD'S EDINBURGH MAGAZINE.

No. MXXXIV.

DECEMBER 1901.

VOL. CLXX.

DAY.

BY "LINESMAN."

THE events of a two years' campaign truly come like shadows, so depart. It is extraordinary, on looking back from this, the twenty-third month of this unique conflict, to reflect upon the spasmodic and will-o'-the-wisp nature of our experiences therein: times of suspense, of lethargy, of utter boredom, of struggling and anxiety so intense that the whole of life seemed focussed into a few moments, alternating the one with the other with such rapidity, and with such apparent lack of *motif*, that in very truth the most striking feature of war seems to be its monotony of variety. Which is not a conceit, but the truth, for the time comes when the variety has little charm, tending rather

to glumness. Paganini was fine at a theme, magnificent at a variation, superb at a super-variation, but I have heard it said that his fiddle-string revolted at the extra-super and double-extra-super involutions of sound he subsequently imposed upon it, and that his climax was not seldom an anti-climax, a mere wearisome reduplication of echoes. So it is with human fiddle-strings,—they are capable of sustaining but a limited reiteration of experiences. A man is idle, and safe; suddenly business and danger are heaped upon him, and he likes it, discharging the one and meeting the other with dispatch and fortitude. He is idle again and rejoices in his leisure, rejoicing also in the

return of toil and peril. So on for a few revolutions of the great wheel of war, rolling a complete turn sometimes in a month, sometimes in a week, or a day, every turn spelling hope to him, for his idleness must be bringing him pleasantly, his peril roughly but more speedily, to the Ultima Thule, peace and old England. But, as I say, when these vicissitudes have been repeated a hundred times their joy vanishes and gives room to that miserable *Cui bono* state of mind expressed with so much dignity in latter-day English as "staleness." What is the good of this eternal galloping after and harrying of Boers? We were doing the same last month, and two months before that, and again in the month before that. And what doth it profit a man that between whiles he sits peacefully in his tent? has he not sat thus fifty times before, thinking of trains and troopships, and the crossing between the lower end of Bond Street and St James's on a June day?

Of all of which I am reminded by an incident which occurred in a camp upon the railway, a little camp whose inhabitants had sweated and shivered and chafed for a solid year over the duties their guardianship imposed upon them: now as a column to teach a neighbouring commando a lesson, now as a raiding party to clear some farm of mealies, now attacking, now attacked, now scouting, now very much aware that they were being scouted.

Not a paragraph of the tactical books but applied to some one or other of the operations done from September to September, done not once nor twice but a dozen times. The very incident I am about to describe was nothing new, being in essentials a very photograph of previous ones (though in details truly a trifle more coloured), creating so little subsequent comment that for that very reason it occurred to me as worth describing, my purpose being to throw a glimmer of light on this war as it has been, treating of the "ordinary run" of things, which, after all, make up the mighty thing called war, as Mr Begbie's 'Common Heroes' compose the mighty thing called life.

This camp is like many others, situated upon a plateau of the high veldt, across which the railway runs like a spine to the great body of men around it, and as precious, also as vulnerable. And like all others it has pickets, or, as they are called by day, observation-posts, perched upon the spurs and flat hills which conduct the plateau down to the flats below all points of the compass: one to the north, gazing over a sea of grass towards Ermelo; one to the east, towards the rocky wall of the Elandsburg; one to the west, peering at nothing in particular but mile after mile of monotony; and one to the south, with a view and experiences so varied that, as on the latter hangs this tale, the former must be described. And indeed the view is sufficiently glorious, though to the men of

the post, who have gazed at it for countless weary hours, in blazing heat, in bitter hail, in the early morning when each hollow blushes like some lovely pink scallop-shell, at fall of night when they loom like the mouths of coal-pits, with coaly ridges above,—to these men the meanest hoarding in London would seem a prospect more entrancing. Even their daily perch is fine, the summit of a bold concave spur which sweeps out into the flats below like a ram of a battleship descending from a great wave, and at its foot the rough dongas and hummocks resemble the watery confusion which tumbles and tosses below the noses of big ships. For these flats are no flats at all in reality, but a maze of watercourses, undulations, and stonecrops, invisible from above, or from anywhere except their own banks and outskirts. Mile after mile they twist and turn, growing deeper and more broken, until their small trouble ends in the great, calm berg, which rises suddenly and majestically and shuts out all farther view to the southwards. But one wants no more; the berg is a spectacular climax as seen from the observation-post, with its lofty ridges, its solid buttresses of grass, the recesses which lurk like shadows on its great flanks, and the play of sun and cloud all day long across its rolling bulk. One must liken it to a ship, with gigantic bow and stern overhanging the terrain at either extremity, and many projections and superstructures along its broad decks. Below the stern,

that is, the northern end, lies a dim, indefinite country. Here the Zand and Klip rivers meet, in a jungle of dongas and stony hollows, alternating with slabs of rich grass occurring so suddenly amidst the desolation that they look like green pictures framed with stones. And here, on the day of the event about to be described, lay the Boers.

The Boers, how changed from the stately commandoes which poured into Natal two years ago, solid mobs of keen, resourceful men, bent on the apotheosis of man's errands, conquest! Gone is the discipline and unity of purpose, gone the commandants, the field-cornets, every symbol of that authority which alone makes war respectable, gone the guns, gone many a stout heart and eagle eye, gone much of the legitimate enthusiasm, gone the country and the Cause; present with this lurking four hundred only despair and the bitter, unreasonable hate of the nation they had pulled by the very nose into their land, mocking at his unwillingness and huge grimaces, spitting at him for his slowness in coming, cursing him now, and themselves, for his enormous, immovable presence. And what a 400! The skimmings, or if you will the fusel-oil (for there is bite and bitterness in them) of five commandoes, armed wastrels from the Wakkerstroom hills, from the grassy uplands of Stander-ton and Ermelo, from the salt lakes of Bethal, from the rich pastures of Vrede,—some Macaulay must tell of them some

day, in a "lay made about the year 2000" (they will not be heroic until then), and of their Lars Porsena and his trysting day at swampy Zandspruit. Poor old Piet Joubert, the Boer nation will never look upon his like again, nor perhaps will any nation be blest with greater self-sacrifice in a son! He saw the end plainly enough with his old hunter's eyes, but the "thirty chosen prophets, the wisest of the land," who stood both morn and evening croaking "Go forth!" were too much for him. He went, to perdition as he expected. Not a small example of heroism this: a man who, being commanded by his kinsmen, commanded them to march to their doom, and marched at the head of them through the Gate of Evil Luck as bravely as he who was wept over in the dawn of Rome.

And now behold the remnants of those who rode behind old Consul Fabius Pietrus, lurking in their Cremera amongst the sandstone dongas in the dim dawn. The cause is lost, but rifles and horses remain: a man may do a good deal with these, and something shall be done to-day. Away across the flats, between them and the eastern light, rises the great ram whose summit will be occupied in an hour or two by the British post, at present empty and lonely, standing like a gigantic sentinel of rock against the pink sky. Why not occupy it first, and capture the picket as it moves up to its post for the day? But 400 want more than a *hors d'œuvre*, only a few can enjoy the ambush,—what

can be done to give the others a meal? Simplicity itself, declare the *habitués*, the locals who have been loafing round the camp ever since its formation a year ago. They have tried this very feat not once but half-a-dozen times before with singular ill luck; they grumble, something having always gone wrong at the critical moment: either they were detected and were themselves stalked round the steep corners of the spur, or—as once happened—their welcoming volley beat but the dull ground, no time being given by the galloping *rooineks* for another, or they found the men of the post already in position, with hissing volleys down the slopes as a greeting. Only once did any measure of success attend them, and then a single soldier, an inferior horse, and a broken heliograph were the only spoils. But afterwards the same thing always occurred, and herein lies our chance, we being 400. Out from the camp would rush the British mounted men, tearing like the wind down the green slopes under the spur, and in a moment away over the flats after the retiring ambuscade, which had to fly for all it was worth before them. Sometimes these bold horsemen, angry at being turned out so early, would sweep on even down to the very river-bank, seven miles from camp, in small eager parties prying for Boers in every hollow and donga. So herein lies the chance of this motley 400. Say the post is

captured, say that on retiring the cloud of cavalry descend upon the adventurous Burghers. The latter will flee, with apparent madness, but as a Burgher always flees, with method. On and on they will canter, in full view, trotting if they gain too much on their pursuers, halting if the latter look like giving up the chase. Meanwhile the rest will lie hidden in places they know of until the scattered Britons come near enough for decisive shooting, or, better still, if possible will let them pass altogether, then to rise in the name of the Lord and slay them from behind, blocking their road to camp. A pretty plot, my masters, and no sooner said than put in train, for the light is growing, and the British picket will soon be moving out.

A dozen Boers volunteer for the preliminary. After much guttural discussion six are selected, and these, flinging their blankets from their saddles (for they will have to gallop), trot briskly off towards the spur, along hollows and spruit-beds, riding two and two. They are seen bobbing over the last undulation, and then, after a moment of invisibility, climbing diagonally up the left of the spur. They dismount, leave their ponies in a little black clump below the crest, and finally disappear altogether as they crawl towards the stone sangars erected by the absent post for shelter. So far, so good. The shabby crowd which has watched them in silence over the edges of the dongas silently breaks up, and in a few

moments is pushing towards the rises and hollows below the observation-post and two miles this side of it. It is hopeless to follow their skilful progress—here a man, there a man; every vantage-ground is occupied, every tempting gap left open; the plain is full of Boers, yet not a man can be seen even from the summit of the spur. But the Burghers crouching in the sangars know almost by instinct where their friends are lying, and feel none of the loneliness a civilised soldier would feel in such a situation. Boers have two of the most valuable of martial qualities—an eye for country and self-reliance. Had they the third—the instinct of self-sacrifice—at command, they would be the most formidable fighting men on earth: even without it they are nearly so. The British soldier has the third—the only unteachable one—without the other two qualities, and he has it so abundantly that their deficiency has been sometimes nullified. Teach them to him, and you have a soldier who will conquer the world in arms with little loss, not, as now, with the full expectation of attending the funeral of one in every twenty of his friends.

Scene changes now to the British camp, lying about two miles north of the spur. *Réveillé* is just blowing its cheerful tootle-too at the half-hour old sun as the Boers creep into the sangars at the observation-post. Down in the cavalry lines six troopers are swallow-

ing hot cocoa, standing with the reins of their saddled horses over their arms. The big tin mugs tilt higher and higher, come down together with a swing, and are flung into the tent door. "Come on, chaps; time to be moving!" and out goes the south observation-post to take up its position for the day, rejoicing not a whit in the fresh morning air and the soft green turf, though these are champagne to their horses, who caper through the opening in the barbed wire entanglement with very artistic pretence of alarm at its row of hanging tin pots. Then the little party spreads out to an interval of thirty yards between man and man, the days being past when men took their morning constitutitionals in South Africa in amicable bunches. *Ohé!* when will the day come when respectable Britons may cease to consider themselves as "targets"? They have not gone far when an excited looking trolley, coming bowling along the railway which runs parallel to their left, attracts their attention. The platelayer seems to be making his morning run in a great hurry to-day, and has company apparently — female company withal, and of the liveliest! For upon the trolley behold three Kafir maidens, seated not modest and maidenly, but waving their ebon arms and calling shrilly, with hands placed funnelwise, whilst the coolies bound with giant strides behind and alongside the humming wheels — a spectacle to

make more gloomy souls than troopers laugh, so they duly guffaw, with heads thrown back, in great peals of honest merriment, which startles a jack-hare from his form and sends him lobbing off, one ear pointed forward, one back. But the laughter stops abruptly as the trolley pulls up, and its occupants leap to the ground and run to the wire fence, beckoning wildly. "What's up now, I wonder?" grumbles the sergeant in charge, and trots off to the wire, bending over his saddle-bow to hear what the gesticulating native girls are shrieking at him. Plenty is "up," in truth! The girls, who had mooned out towards the spur before dawn to cut grass wherewith to thatch the huts against the rainy season, had spied Boers upon the observation-post, and had promptly rushed off at a tangent to the neighbouring platelayer's house and told the tale; and the platelayer, being an old soldier with a marked dislike for Boers, had bethought him of this the quickest way to warn the approaching picket. Worthy platelayer and worthy black Camillas, "scouring the dewy plain" to such honest purpose! War would be much bloodier had it not its humble danger-signals: army corps as well as observation-posts have owed their salvation to them, or gone to ruin because happy-go-lucky drivers disregarded their warning. Then the six troopers creep back to camp with much care that they do

not come in view of the sangars on the spur, and tell their tale to their commanding officer. Boot and saddle! boot and saddle! that trick must be trumped inside half an hour!

Out they go, fifty picturesque brown horsemen, with shaggy nags and "smasher" hats, and a general leathery cowboy look. What is it about our irregular horse that makes a lump rise in the throat as one sees them streaming along at a canter, big, fit, sunburnt men, with an air about them that makes one think also of the boundlessness of an Empire which pours such men from its almost unknown recesses? Their captain has many a time studied this particular lead in the game, and has discovered a winding dip in the ground which brings one unseen around and within charging distance of the sangars on the spur,—an almost imperceptible dip, no dip at all to the ordinary eye, but the squadron flies along it all the same, with the tops of their hats perhaps no more than a foot below the line of sight from the post all the way, an object-lesson in the value of ground, more often taught by Boer than British horsemen. And so they sweep on, the sound of them smothered by the sharp morning breeze, moving across but ever nearer to the concealed Boers, as the fowler edges in to his "dopping" of teal or "gaggle" of geese. But the six Boers, past masters in the human fowling art themselves, are neither graceful teal nor silly geese, but six keen-

eyed, very suspicious, dingy fighting men. Moreover, they have been uneasy this last quarter of an hour past at the non-appearance of the observation-post: something must have happened or those clockwork Britons would be coming up the slope by now, in clockwork fashion, two bits of mechanism in front, four behind; no calipers ever made would beat the eye of British soldiers disposing themselves upon the round bosom of the earth. But they come not,—how is that? Hendrik will see, and, lying flat upon his stomach, crawls to the edge of the spur from whence the hillside towards the camp is visible in portions. By Paul!—not the Saint but him lately of Pretoria,—they come not in single spies but in battalions, twenty, thirty, fifty hats bobbing away under the shelf of grass a quarter of a mile off, and they come fast on their corn-fed horses! *Opstaal!* Mount, Burghers! The outwitted six are up and away in no time,—no use trying to go hidden, the advancing squadron has the ground between them and their friends in full view. Lord! to see them go! The Boers are not fine horsemen but good and bold ones, and they fear neither steep places (not agreeing they are swine and never having seen the sea) nor ant-bear holes. They literally bound down the nose of the rocky ram, their active little ponies cocking their ears and eyes for dangers beneath whilst in middle air. And then they are sighted. View halloa! Gone

away! a yell as from fifty James Piggs bursts from the British squadron, forrard! forrard! forrard awa-a-a-y! How they spread and thunder down the grassy slope, the horses curling and uncurling their twinkling legs in the gallop, necks stretched and ears flat amongst the manes, every rider "finishing" with bent body and whirling heels, the air full of clods of earth, flecks of foam, and the yells, thuddings, and jingling hurly-burly of a charging squadron. The flying Boers do not yell, but bend anxiously over the horses' necks, legs still, the one spur being well "home" all the time. This is going to be a nearer thing than they bargained for! The grey plover get up screeching before them, and the Dutchmen instinctively remember a lesson taught by these birds, which their fathers have watched a hundred years. "When in danger, separate." Insensibly the distance between man and man increases, until under the shelter of a crest line of grass they turn sharply outwards from each other, and seem to melt in various directions into the expanse of veldt, each heading for where he knows his comrades to be lying in wait. The pursuing cavalry split up too; twenty bear to the left, twenty keep on, ten to the right, down a long dip which ends in a donga under a little ruined farm, each with the bobbing figures of two Boers in front. And so on for a few breathless minutes more, until the horses begin to sob and waver, and the reins become slippery from

their sweat. Suddenly crash! from the extreme left, Captain B.'s party has run into the ambushade! But the Boers have fired too soon, and our men are off and letting drive into them in no time. Crash! again from the extreme right, the ten are in for it, but they too can dismount and return the fire. A little later, crash! for the third time, from the front, where the British party has outstripped its flankers by more than a mile. Here's a pretty kettle of fish! The firing is tremendous, sounding from a half circle of five miles or so, a curious sound to one watching from the observation-post, coming apparently from the featureless ground itself, for not a man, Boer or Briton, is visible for a time, all being flat in the grass. The left-hand party is firing volleys, the peculiar tearing, ripping sound of which punctuates the incessant rat-tat of the independent fire from the other detachments, and the hollow tapping of the Mausers echoing all over the veldt outside the half circle. The foremost party is most hotly engaged; a regular scrimmage of rifle fire is going on away out there; and the right detachment, having apparently silenced the fire of their few opponents, determine to relieve the pressure by advancing to the farm from whence they may be able to assist their friends by an enfilading fire.

Just as they rise and hurriedly mount, the gun, which had laboured out of camp in charge of the infantry, booms from the spur behind, and the

shell smashes dustily into the farm building. A lucky shot, indeed, for out dash thirty Dutchmen, rush to their ponies hidden behind the walls, and scamper off down the donga. Rejoice, ye dauntless ten! another few yards and you would have been into that trap: the Boers had only stopped firing because they couldn't see you, and asked nothing better than the advance you contemplated! But they are off now, and the men occupy the farm. But it is too far back after all to enable them to shoot past Captain H.'s party on the left front, who are still at it hammer-and-tongs. They can see the thirty Boers slowly moving up a slope far ahead out of range, so there can be no harm in a farther advance. Nor is there for 500 yards or so, but just as they top a rise that distance ahead, thirty other lurking Dutchmen spring up almost on top of them. The surprise is apparently mutual; such a banging was never heard, nor, luckily for our men, a more innocuous one. They retire slowly, some on foot, some still mounted, who turn in the saddle and fire until the magazine is empty, when they jog on again, reloading in all haste. The horse of a Kafir scout and one of a corporal are shot, and fall confusedly, gazing wildly around. Poor beasts, this quarrel is none of theirs; hard that they must bear so heavy a share in it: so they die, feebly kicking and stretching their handsome heads to the pitiless sky for air. The Kafir is furious, and were the situation less intense his fury

would be ludicrous. He turns towards the Boers, leaping and dancing in anger, and pouring forth floods of Basuto profanity at his foes. Oh for a broad-bladed assegai and a shield of bison hide,—the braves of the Quathlamba have stormed through worse fire than this and *arrived!* This place was gay enough once, "but something ails it now," when the mountain fighting men must tamely fall unarmed in the midst of fighting. But the white guide who is with this party (as he is ever where the risk is greatest, he not being paid for fighting—nay, being forbidden to fight!) takes command of the angry brave, and orders him back to camp. So he starts him off on that wonderful dog-trot which will take a native forty miles in the day, and disappears campwards untouched, stopping now and again to hurl his anathema at the sniping Dutchmen. The latter have ceased the pursuit, fearing an ambush (game-keepers do not get caught in weasel-traps!), and the party of Britons takes up position at the farm, unwilling to retire farther and unable to advance.

Meanwhile on the left Captain B.'s party, similarly blocked, have been blazing away uninterruptedly. The Boers here have been reinforced, and, becoming bold, have shown themselves once or twice as they galloped or crawled to better firing positions, paying for their temerity with one or two men *hors de combat*. The horse of one is wounded, and becomes un-

manageable, carrying its rider into full view during a pause in the firing, in which the silence is for a moment absolute. But an old Canadian sergeant is squinting along his rifle-barrel — bang! The galloping horse stops, though it is not he who is shot, and the little black figure on top tilts slowly sideways and falls stiffly to the ground, like a tin soldier from his peg on the scarlet saddle of lead. But in a moment two Boers are kneeling beside him, and the limp thing on the ground is swung over a saddle and borne off like a sack of meal, head and legs flapping aimlessly on either side of the startled horse. Then the rapid firing commences again from both sides; but as both sides have good cover behind ant-heaps little damage is done by the hundreds of bullets which rip through the dry grass,—a horse or two wounded, a man shot through the shoulder, several men grazed, and much clothing miraculously riddled.

Until war ceases, which will be the greatest miracle of all, it will always be the exhibition-ground of miracles. How *can* a bullet puncture a man's coat behind and before, or pierce his boot and sock and be gravely shaken out of both, without wounding him? Yet I have seen both these things happen. And what mysterious channel does the human body contain which leads a bullet dexterously around the heart, a hair's-breadth from the seat of life, yet never rending it,—a phenomenon vouched for by more than one army surgeon? Shells have burst thunderously be-

tween the very legs of soldiers and left them still soldiers. Pom-pom shells of two inches diameter have passed through legs and arms without shattering the bone or bursting at the impact, though there appears to be literally no room for such a merciful performance. In fact, a history of the *escapes* in war would be wild reading even after a course of Munchausen.

So much for the left and right,—we may leave them to their bang-banging and hair-breadth 'scapes, and proceed to the front, where brisk doings will be presently to the fore. This central party had, as already related, moved far in advance of its flankers before the latter became engaged, to find itself blocked, as they had been blocked, by a strong body of riflemen ahead. But, unlike the others, Captain H.'s men soon became agreeably aware that their fire is mastering that of the Boers, which dwindles slowly before them, rifle by rifle ceasing: first that bearded old tory firing black powder on the right finds his cherished Westley - Richards, for whose sake he spurned the spick-and-span Mauser offered him, outclassed, so slithers unostentatiously down his slope and rides off, and his heavy leaden bullets smack the ground no more; then a Boer who has been making marvellous shooting from behind a high ant-heap discovers that his too marked shelter is being far too frequently chipped and powdered for comfort, and he too quits it without advertisement; another has his hat whisked from his head with a cold and

horrible little breeze through his hair; another has his rifle-stock shivered in his hand as he raises the weapon to refill; another behind a conspicuous stone finds himself under such a beating hail of British bullets that he dare not fire at all, and so on. Few Boers can stand punishment on equal terms, though they will bear the most terrific hammering if they seem to hold the trumps. So these thirty or so melt, and a chuckle of gratification not unmingled with relief runs along Captain H.'s grovelling, sweating twenty. A moment's pause, a tentative shot or two at the innocent grass and ant-heaps, and "pass the word to retire"! They mount and move back in widely extended order, the firing on both flanks has ceased for a while, and all seems over: a sporting little affair, let us get back to lunch, canter-r-r-r! The word of command is re-echoed, British fashion, from N.C.O. to N.C.O., and repeated jovially by most of the men. Canter boys! Another little reminiscence has been laid down, not unworthy of decanting forty years hence in cosy moments around the fire at home—a thing that *has been*, a fact, is true vintage. Curious now to consider how satisfied we have all been with frothy draughts of what might be, or might have been, in our post-prandial speculations, productive often of heartburn and the other ills born of unsound elixirs.

But it is unwise to holloa at any time, proverbially so until the wood is well behind! And a great and sudden silence falls

on Captain H. and his chattering, cantering command, when a Mauser shot cracks from the top of an undulation directly ahead of them, like the sound of a breaking stick, then another, a dozen others, and once more the bullets begin to spit and whizz around them. Boers between them and camp—how did they get there? Easily enough: the band retiring up the slope before the dauntless ten on the right had seen the situation as on a plaster-of-Paris plan from their height,—three little isolated British parties with two thousand yards and multitudinous hollows between each; what more simple than to stream in line ahead, Nelson-wise, down the deepest, which is also the directest, of the dips between the British right and centre, backing topsails on a rise behind both! And done instantaneously, at a furious gallop, most dashing of conceptions and executions to a spectator, with a plucky racing figure on a thoroughbred pony well ahead to show the way. Now, Captain H., a good deal depends on how that brain and nerve of yours serve you in the next tenth part of a minute—twenty men's lives, and perhaps the destination of their souls, this being liable or entitled to alteration if more life be engineered out of this fix for their bodies by you. Or at least twenty men's honours, and as in war the less includes the greater, something of the honour of ten thousand times twenty men hangs this instant on your word. Which is it to be, "Hands up!" or "Charge!!" The word is taken out of our mouth, no

trumpet ever blared it louder, a splendid word, whether from brass or human throat! And with heads down and heels in, they charge. It must be a gallant sight to see the grey boar not die, but burst his way through those who hem him in; the fine old Indian hunting-song might have spared a verse for it. With lowered rifles these trapped English boars thunder up the gentle slope, the dust of hundreds of bullets meeting the cloud from their horses' hoofs in a yellow confusion: they close with the scattered line of Dutchmen at the top,—some of whom are mounted, some kneeling, some leaping into the saddle,—crash through it, and tear down the other side. A roar arises at that tremendous meeting and parting, a roar of rifles, and blaspheming, cheering voices; some of the Boers upon the ground cock their weapons up sideways and snap at the galloping horsemen; the latter turn theirs downwards and snap back, holding the heavy arms like pistols. "Thumbs up! thumbs down!" death and mercy seem equally balanced in this modern arena. One, two, three Britons are down, falling like avalanches, from which friend and foe alike recoil outwards, jingling, rolling masses of overwhelmed horses and humanity. But some of our wobbling rifles wobble on to a mark, three or four Dutchmen bite the dust with shrill cries (every Boer, whether in pain or pleasure, pipes like a hysterical woman), peering up at the horsemen dashing by with the distressed look of men who know that they have sud-

denly come to the end of all things—an indescribable and unforgettable look, set apart of all human expressions for violent death. But now all living Boers are mounted and galloping with the troopers in an extraordinary pell-mell of yelling, blundering figures; here an Englishman dashing forward, lying along his horse's neck, with Boers all around him, shouting to him to "hands up!" here a Boer similarly surrounded. There is no firing for a time, only a whirlwind of speed and shouting. "There's the commandant, shoot him!" yells a youthful Boer pointing to the figure of the officer galloping amidst the *melée*, whose mourning-bound arm had betrayed him. Some one's rifle bangs, and some one is down, not the officer, who fires right and left with his revolver, glancing rapidly from side to side. Boers hate revolvers, and a circle of thirty yards is soon clear around him. A trooper finds his bridle gripped on both sides by two Boers who close in upon him at full speed. "Hands up! hands up!" He flings his rifle across to the left and pulls trigger; his left hand assailant tumbles outwards, swinging his arms and coughing horribly, shot through the side, seeming to leap from the saddle as he dies. The right-hand Boer lets go, and is for making off, but is shot by some one else as he slews away. Five Boers are then captured on the right, but, cunning fellows, they will not gallop, and soon drop behind into safety! And now the chase, which has rushed on for

but a tenth of the time we have taken in narrating it, sweeps down a slope past some "pans" half-full of water, with tremendous shouting and clamour, the Boers yelling like madmen, firing but little, it being difficult to load and shoot at such a pace down hill: the troopers swearing like troopers over their shoulders back at them, for the corn-fed horses are wearing down the grass-fed, which are now galloping but two feet to the former's yard, then one foot, then no feet,—the Boers must stop. As they do so they leap to the ground, taking hasty snapshots at the receding figures, who disappear into safety at last, every man looking back over his shoulder, still yelling, until the sound of them grows faint, and finally dies away altogether, leaving the veldt to silence and the Boers. For the other parties have withdrawn unpursued, and can be seen clustered together on the summit of the observation-post, with Captain H.'s breathless, exulting detachment dribbling up to them from below, seven short at the roll-call on the top.

For at the "pans" at the foot of the slope several things had happened. Two men being dismounted, one slightly wounded, and the horses of both shot, one threw his rifle into the water, and the other hid himself amongst the vegetation on its margin, both acts unnoticed by the galloping Boers. The unarmed man was shortly after taken prisoner by a party of Dutchmen straggling behind, and was promptly stripped and released. As his captors moved

off, the concealed nymph in the rushes opened fire on them, to their intense bewilderment, remaining undiscovered in spite of their circular canterings. Finally the baffled Dutchmen drew off altogether, their retirement hastened by the accurate sniping of the submerged trooper, who then cautiously left his lair and actually succeeded in stalking his way back to his friends on the observation-post, a dripping, chuckling figure, with an experience surely unequalled in the annals of war! Another had fallen just short of these water-holes, his horse being killed, and his leg so entangled in the stirrup leathers that he was forced to lie helpless beside his slain steed. And so lying, he was "reduced into possession" by a couple of Dutchmen. "Are you wounded?" "No." "Then you're safe enough!" and the two trotted on. But after a little struggling the foot was released, and the angry trooper sought revenge by opening fire on any Boers within his range of vision. Naturally enough, he was soon surrounded, and forcibly disarmed, and his humiliation completed by being placed under the eye of an armed Dutch boy of twelve years or so, who conducted him at the trot a long way to the rear, and on his sinking to the ground out of breath, left him to join the fun in front. Then, as he lay panting, lo! a woman! A woman on horseback, with riding habit and side-saddle complete! Venus emerging at Dieppe would not cause more utter amazement amongst the bathers than this trim female to the battle-stained

breathless figure upon the ground. And no Boer Bellona either! there is a conciseness about her English, and a humorous sub-twinkle in its import, that can only hail from the land of Tammany and Mark Twain. "Say, are you wounded?" "No," again; one can imagine in what accents! "Then take off your boots!" Lucifer himself, lying floating many a rood, would have to obey! The apparition receives them, and, tying them together by the laces in a business-like way that speaks of "dry-goods stores" away West, gravely slings them over her saddle-crutch and turns away. The Boers want boots. "Now, slide!" says she over her shoulder. "*Slide!*" Are we waking or dreaming? But she is gone, and the mystery of her being gone with her. Upon what relation she bears to that gang ahead only luck and years of head-scratching will throw light. Stay! That huge, handsome, red-bearded commandant who galloped on his thoroughbred ahead of his troop! Does he, like Alexander, take the field with Thais? It is a scandalous but fascinating thought; away with it! And in the meantime we "slide," bootless and ashamed, conscious of having sipped at yet another mystery of this mysterious race and land.

And we, now that it is all over, and the two poor dead buried,—brought in by the ambulance with blue holes in their

chest and foreheads,—can sip at many more. A strange people these Boers, with cowardice and heroism, murder and mercy, so wonderfully intermingled in their composition. Why do they spare their prisoners (as they did many this day) and cruelly slaughter innocent men under the white flag, as they have done this very day on which we write?¹ Why do they surrender in thousands, yet fight on with "insensate" gallantry in hundreds? There is no answer. No one has understood, or ever will understand, the Boers: they have flung themselves into illegibility before the type was cast by which one could read them. Call them cruel, call them humane, call them brave or pusillanimous, call them sand or adamant, gazette them (being much annoyed with them) as "insensate,"² or in kindly ignorant Hobhouseism blubber over them as an ill-used people rightly struggling to be free, you will have right on your side in any of these labellings. For the Boer character is a strangely cut diamond, with so many facets of pure water, and so many of pure dross and flaws, that the expert has yet to live who can value it. Some pish it down as valueless, some puff it up as priceless; both, as pishers and puffers usually are, being noisily wrong. But I believe it to be a diamond, nevertheless, and Englishmen will do wrong to be ashamed that it has broken many a good tool in the cutting.

¹ September 26, 1901. An officer going out to meet a flag of truce was shot dead through the back as he turned to leave at the close of the interview.

² See despatch of August 23, 1901.

CAMPING ON LAKE WINNIPEG.

THERE were five of us on the train. First, the "Skipper," nominally head of the party, who was beginning to slough off the respectability of a K.C. and to emerge in his true self as a somewhat disreputable savage of aquatic proclivities. Secondly, Candida, who is unhappily incapable of divesting herself of her clear common-sense, but with whom a man would go tiger-shooting, if that sport ever came in his way. Thirdly, the Cicala, the actual commander-in-chief. The doctors say she has a "heart," though none of her friends has ever been able to detect any trace of such an organ in her composition. The "heart" is supposed to be the result of an attack of rheumatic fever in early infancy, and serves as an excellent pretext for not paddling when the sun is hot, or for spurring others to extra exertion by crushing sarcasm when any work has to be done. Fourthly, the Laird, fresh from South Africa, who is travelling here under the impression that there is something wrong with his lungs, though he slept for three weeks in a leaky tent, between a marsh on one side and some 10,000 square miles of water on the other, and looked as bronzed and healthy as a newly-landed bluejacket at the end of it. Fifthly, the Englishman, who follows the Cicala's example in assuming an attitude of Buddha-like tranquillity when there is any special call for physical effort.

We reached the end of our journey after sunset, and the Skipper covered himself with glory by picking out our cook and his wife and papoose from a covey of dusky half-breeds at the first shot. Then we hired a waggon; loaded it with tents, canoes, gun-cases, cartridge-boxes, and baggage of all sorts, till it resembled a furniture-removal van; mounted our new retainers on the top of the pile; and finally walked up to the hotel by a side street to look as if we didn't belong to it.

We had to paint one of the canoes overnight, by the light of a lantern, and the men went to bed dappled with patches of bright green, which they confidently declared would wear away in time by a natural process of attrition: anyhow, they were certainly not going to sit up until they had washed them off. Next morning the Skipper was in his element buying provisions in the country store, and holding interminable consultations with Candida and the Laird; while the Cicala and the Englishman were trying on straw hats at 20 cents a-piece, eating plums out of a basket, and assenting cheerfully and indiscriminately to every proposition mooted by the other three. It was high noon of the hottest day in the summer before we got under way, and the girls looked ruefully at their white hands, and wondered how long it would take for the tan to wear off on

their return. In the first canoe were Candida, the Laird, and a half-breed boy, specially engaged to paddle the thirty miles or so we had to travel before reaching our camping-ground. In the second were the Skipper, the Cicala, and the Englishman, the first named regarding his crew as quite irresponsible and not to be trusted out of range of his own eyes so long as canoe work had to be done. Lastly, and most important, came the *bot*. The latter word is Cree-English for "boat," and is applied to a rough - built, flat - bottomed scow, propelled by one or two pair of sculls and—under favourable circumstances—by a sail improvised from the nearest blanket.

Our particular *bot* was christened Ethel at the bow, after the papoose, and Dasy at the stern, after somebody unknown, and was capable of carrying a quite extraordinary amount of dunnage and of crew. How those Indians ever managed to stow away four tents, poles, provisions, guns, ammunition, all the clothes of the party except what they had on their backs, cooking utensils, and all manner of odds and ends, and yet leave themselves room to work the oars, is a great mystery; but they did it, and the Ethel-Dasy bowled along at two knots an hour, looking like an overgrown gondola.

We only went far enough to feel we were getting away from civilisation on the first day, and camped under a grove of trees near the river-bank, with the distant tinkle of the cow-

bells to soothe us to sleep, and the fervent blessings of the Laird, when the mosquitoes called him in the morning, to wake us up. The sky on the eastern bank of the river was fading from milky opal to turquoise; and the Skipper looked pityingly at the two Old Country men, and prophesied that they would have mighty little epidermis left on them by this time to-morrow. It may be stated at once that his forecast turned out perfectly correct, and that the Laird and the Englishman, both fair-haired men, peeled like dragon-flies all over; and also that the Skipper, who is naturally nearly as dark as an Indian, lost the skin off his wrists, and made more fuss over it than the other two put together. It was one of the hottest paddles on record: there was not a breath of wind; the sun beat back off the water as from the roof of a conservatory; the men set their teeth and worked grimly, while the girls vainly tried to improvise some sort of shade out of pillow-cases rigged up on sticks. The Cicala considers that the monologue which she dignifies by the name of conversation more than compensates for any work with the paddle on her part; but even that played out at last, and she lay prostrate in the bottom of the canoe, murmuring incoherences about the effect of sunstroke on a specially constructed brain. The Laird is considerably over a fathom in length when he is pulled out straight, and the effort of coiling him-

self up to fit between the thwarts tells on him severely, even when his joints have got properly oiled up.

Mile after mile we put behind us, the long silver ribbon widening gradually as we neared the forks and slanted into the west channel, picking out one landmark after another, and noting silently how the contour had changed owing to the abnormally high water this year, till at last the Englishman in the bow of the foremost canoe gasped out the words "Thalassa! Thalassa!" and we all sat up to stare out at the wide expanse of inland sea that lay like a polished shield between us and the sky-line.

Ten minutes later the surface to the north turned to blue steel, and we hoisted the white sails quickly till the light craft careened over and water began to purl and ripple past our bows. On our port side lay the long, low, willow-fringed shore, bordered with a strip of gleaming sand up which small creaming breakers were beginning to tumble confusedly over one another. Behind that a broken girdle of trees—maple, poplar, and mountain ash—and behind them the great swamp; acres and acres of bright green flags and darker rushes and cane-coloured reeds, mottled with patches of shimmering water and cleft through the middle by the broad, clear channel. Directly in front of us, but some miles distant, a long peninsula ran out from the mainland and hung poised on the surface of the lake like a

slender blue javelin; while far away astern the lighthouse, a tiny pillar of dazzling white, seemed to deepen the azure of the sky behind. To the north the island of Grand Marais showed the tops of the trees above a line of vaporous mirage, and everywhere else was open sea as far as the eye could reach.

We camped about a hundred feet from the shore, with our three tents side by side facing the lake, and the Indians a pistol-shot away among the trees near the marsh. The natives are practically immune to mosquito poison; but the rest of us preferred more open ground, and our view in front was obstructed by nothing higher than a few dwarf bushes of red willow, and here and there little patches of what our followers warned us was "rattlesnake ivy," which would sting like a nettle, causing a rash that lasted for months, and was reputed in some cases to be recurrent for years afterwards. As a matter of fact, none of us suffered from it at all, and we soon learned to treat it with contempt—though at first we walked warily, and never removed our shoes till we were on the sandy beach.

The extra hand was despatched to the nearest Indian who was the owner of a hayrick, to beg, borrow, buy, or steal enough hay to make beds,—a job which entailed a journey of some six miles by the time he had collected the necessary material. Meanwhile we were busy enough unrolling blankets,

opening provision-boxes, and stowing away guns and ammunition-cases. George, our cook, and his wife lit a fire, and fried enormous quantities of bacon and all the remaining eggs; for we trusted to our guns and nets, and to the wild plums and raspberries, for most of the commissariat, and carried little besides flour, bacon, tea, sugar, maple syrup, and half a dozen pots of marmalade for the Laird, to whom it is a necessity of life.

Next day the sunlight woke us early, and the three men raced down to the lake with an exultant whoop which warned the girls that it was time to unpack their bathing-dresses. The joy of that first morning dip! as we swam out over the rollers; round the farthest post that marked the end of the long fishing-net, carefully set up by our camp-followers the previous evening; and back—to dry on the warm sand; to get on our flannels, and walk to and fro with vast bowls of porridge while we discussed the prospects of shooting with our Indian hunter, who had hurried over to greet us. Then the girls came up from the water, treading gingerly on the pebbles, the Cicala's progress from the lake to her tent being punctuated by a rhythmic series of staccato screams, the result of pure lightness of heart; while Candida poured a flood of scorn on her regardless head.

We were a couple of miles from our old camping-ground, which was under water this

year, and the Skipper insisted on paying it an early visit, with a view of collecting planks from the wreckage of a neighbouring cottage, long uninhabited, to build a dining shanty. The cottage itself and its outbuildings were tilted in all sorts of grotesque attitudes, and the water was two feet deep in the room where we had taken our meals on stormy days the previous year, many yards from the channel bank. A new creek had opened up which was quite navigable for canoes, and the fish were darting here and there over the sand where the passing Icelanders from far up the lake used to moor their ships and disembark to light a camp-fire before the last run up the river.

Our banqueting-hall was well ventilated, though the architecture was simple. It was the joint design of the Skipper and the Laird, the latter of whom, between the sun, the mosquitoes, and a superfluity of Celtic energy, had succeeded in working himself into a slight fever, which made his friends a little anxious. These two, with the help of the cook, planted four corner-posts at equal distances apart, and overlaid them with planks roughly fixed on, with sufficient intervals to allow peeps at the blue sky overhead. Candida pursued them with handfuls of nails, and was always at the right point when measurements had to be taken; while the Englishman explained to the sympathising Cicala that the fact of our possessing only one axe and one hammer un-

fortunately debarred him from rendering active assistance.

The thousand and one trifles that require attending to about a camp, especially on the first day, kept us so busy during the afternoon that it came on us like a shock to see that the horizon to the north was overshadowed with great masses of thunder-cloud. A tawny rain-storm was lashing Grand Marais, and white breakers were racing up the line of yellow sand, and licking in among the drifted *débris* and blackened roots of upturn willows on the shore. Overhead the sun was still shining, and out on the lake were wide patches of olive-coloured water under the blue sky. The sand-pipers were hopping and feeding along the beach, and above them the grey gulls wheeled and chattered; the big green canoe lay lovingly alongside the Indian boat, the bottom of which was carpeted with dark rushes spangled with glittering fish-scales; and a flight of six teal with outstretched necks was winging hurriedly in from open sea to the shelter of the marsh behind. The Indians stolidly continued their preparations for dinner, saying that the storm would not reach us before night, and we dragged up big back-logs and piled them one over the other, hollowing out the sand beneath, to have the camp-fire ready for immediate use.

That night the Skipper and the Englishman lay tucked comfortably in their blankets looking through the mosquito netting at the wild play of the

lightning on the tormented waters of the lake, listening to the long counter-roll of the thunder booming overhead, and hoping fervently that the others were asleep, and that the Laird's tent was proof against the scourging of the rain. And then, quite suddenly, there was a blinding glare, and at the same instant a splitting crash that seemed to burst right among the very tents. The Skipper jumped, for he knew that his daughters must be awake now, and he called anxiously to the Cicala to know whether she was frightened, and that damsel's sole answer was to pipe out cheerily to the tenant next door, "Did that make you nervous, Laird?" The "cheek" of her, and the relief of finding that the girls were all right, was too much for the Skipper, who lay back and laughed loud and long; and the storm grumbled itself sulkily away to the south-east. Next morning the men began to chafe to be after duck, and they discovered suddenly that the inroads on the bacon were getting serious. The two hunters, "Narcisse Chatelean" and "Favel," were hanging about in their light skiffs to see what our plans would be. There was a curious incident, by the way, in connection with the surname of the latter. The Laird and the Englishman got into a discussion about his nationality, one contending that he was of Scotch extraction on the father's side on account of his intonation and manner generally, the other holding that his name showed that he

was of French descent, citing in support of his argument the accepted derivation of the expression "curry favour," from "favel" a yellow horse. One day we had occasion to inquire his Christian name, in order to distinguish him from his brother, and to our astonishment were told that it was "Curry," though how he came by it we were unable to ascertain.

To return to the shooting: we did not want to kill more than we could eat, as we knew the birds would not keep more than forty-eight hours in this weather; but it is astonishing how much you *can* eat when you are living in the open air, and working hard and doing nothing simultaneously all day. We never dreamt of carving a duck in camp: a fork was stuck into each bird as it came, be it teal or mallard, and it was put on a plate and passed round, the recipient not unusually coming back for more. So that we calculated that an average of eight or ten birds apiece among the three would not be extravagant, and put off in different canoes expecting to have our bag complete in an hour or so. But we had not reckoned with a bright sun and a perfect calm, still less with the alteration in the conditions owing to the extraordinarily high water. The rise or fall of a few inches in a particular locality will make all the difference between a big bag and a blank day, and this year the rise is the highest within a quarter of a century. Wherefore even the Indians were at a loss to know where the birds

had gone; and one of the party, at least, spent most of the day paddling and pushing the canoe through high reeds, over glittering pools and lakelets of open water, and past deserted mudbanks, while his dusky gillie swore strange oaths in a patois of French and English and Swampy-Cree, and called the Red gods to witness that all the ducks must have collected together in some hidden corner, with dire threats of what he would do when he discovered their retreat.

Now pushing and paddling under a hot sun for hours on end is excellent exercise for the muscles, but a little apt to make your hand shake, and upset your nerves at the time, wherefore the bag was small and there were several soul-sickening misses to look back on in the evening. But we got our quota, at all events, and debouched from the west channel into the great lake just in time to paddle into the eye of the setting sun. And the last two or three miles went far to compensate for the disappointments of the day. For, in front of us, the long point of land to the westward was thrust out like a violet pencil floating on a plain of pale citron, trellised over with red gold as the freshening breeze rippled its glassy surface, and the clouds above were of rose and amethyst: even the Indians ceased paddling and bade us look at it, though we needed little urging. When we drew near the camp in the gathering dusk we heard blood-curdling yells from the shore, and saw a weird unearthly figure bounding

along the beach with giant strides and revolving arms, who looked like a wood demon gnashing out curses and fleeing from the wrath to come. It was only George, chasing stray cattle from the camp, and the Cicala was watching him with fascinated eyes. She spent hours subsequently, trying to catch the exact step, and we encouraged her in this because we thought the exercise beneficial—till she began to practise the yell too.

But the shooting improved as time went on, and we managed to learn more about the favourite haunts of the birds. That is one of the beauties of this sport—the conditions change from day to day, and it is only after weeks of constant practice that you begin to feel you know anything about them. With a south wind and ebbing tide the birds will be down near the shore of the big lake, but when a gale from the north is piling up the water in great masses round the estuary of the river they fly for shelter inland. One day we paddled through a hayfield, the long grass reaching over the gunwale of the canoe, and growing so thickly that no water was visible to the eye; indeed a casual observer would have concluded that the canoe was running on wheels. The duck were getting up all round us, singly, and in twos and threes, at every stroke of the paddle; for we had no guns, and there was nothing but the movement of the boat to alarm them: they were as thick as pheasants

at a battue. A week later, about the same time of day, we went over exactly the same ground, not a shot having been fired on it meanwhile, and saw just two birds, which we got,—the water not having fallen more than a couple of inches in the interval.

Lakes rise and fall after the manner of rivers, a heavy rainfall, or a sudden melting of the snows in spring, swelling the volume of water in tributary streams; and this process seems to run in cycles for a number of years, when a reverse operation sets in. The question of regulating the ebb and flow is a highly intricate problem, but the general principle is to widen the channel of exit: deepening would, of course, reduce the normal level, but by simply extending it laterally the work becomes automatic. It is easily understood by imagining the lake to be an ordinary basin with chips around the edges, through some of which the water is constantly flowing in, and through others flowing out. The effect of the lunar tide is quite imperceptible, but the fact is a little hard to realise by men born near the narrow seas, because the general appearance of these vast bodies of water so much resembles that of the ocean. Indeed, geographically speaking, there was a continuous water-route from the wavelets lapping at our feet to the mouth of the Mersey; for from the north-east corner of the lake the great Nelson river, ranked by Colonel Harris "among the first-class rivers of the world," runs down

into Hudson Bay at Port Nelson, under the same parallel as Dundee in Scotland. At its mouth, in the year of our Lord 1782, the French admiral La Pérouse anchored with a 74-gun line-of-battle ship, and two 36-gun frigates, landing 250 men with guns and provisions for eight days. True, its length is only about 400 miles, during which it has a descent of 710 feet from the surface of the lake itself, but it discharges all the waters gathered into the vast basin, including more than a thousand miles of the great Saskatchewan from the base of the Rocky Mountains. Unfortunately, the Nelson is never likely to be navigable for more than forty or fifty miles from the mouth upwards, or for the same distance from the lake downwards. In the central part there is a stretch of 180 miles which, except for a chute of about 15 feet, can be travelled by large river-steamers; but the falls are of solid rock, and the reaches of broken water elsewhere are too considerable to be overcome by modern engineering. Engineers claim, however, that a waterway from the lake to the sea could be secured by way of Hayes' river, which runs into Hudson's Bay at York Factory, the average fall of the river being twenty inches to the mile; and that the probable expense of the locks would not be large, there being at present only three portages on the downward journey, respectively 28 yards, 1315 yards, and 24 yards. There is a depression, apparently once a river-bed, across the height of land be-

tween the Hayes and the Nelson, a distance of two miles, by which the two streams could be connected; and the former was always used in old days by the Hudson Bay Company for the transportation of all their freight to and from Hudson's Bay.

Fort Churchill, at the mouth of the Churchill river, which falls into the bay a little to the north of Port Nelson, is sixty-four miles nearer Liverpool than is Montreal, and 114 miles nearer than New York; but this river, too, is rapid down to the head of tide within eight miles of the sea.

But while the Nelson, with a watershed of half a million square miles, is discharging its turbid stream from the north-east, at the southern extremity the Red river, with its source a short portage of less than a mile from the head-waters of the Mississippi, is constantly adding to the volume of Lake Winnipeg; and, through the Little Saskatchewan, three other lakes pour their waters into it—Dauphin with 387 square miles, Manitoba with 1815 square miles, and Winnipegosis with 2030 square miles. Furthermore, at its northern extremity it receives the great Saskatchewan river, rising 1200 miles away in the Rocky Mountains, and flowing through a wheat-field extending a thousand miles beyond the Manitoba boundary.

We spent hours mapping out imaginary voyages after sunset, when we had carried up small trees from the driftwood on the beach, and built great

camp-fires in scientific fashion that burnt far into the night, and left smouldering embers embedded in the sand next morning. We would spread tarpaulins in front of them, pillowing our heads on cushions propped against empty boxes behind, and lie back, thanking the gods that we were out of reach of business and bathing machines, *et tout ce charivari là*, and that there were no white people to come and call and make conversation. Overhead were the clear dark sky and the throbbing stars, and at our feet a glowing core of heat, with a stubble of flame licking between the topmost logs; above that, framed in a blue-black treasure of willow and mountain ash, a distant peep of the mere set in the big swamp, with the moon gleaming on the water. Behind us was the surge of the great lake, the waves breaking on the beach with a queer kind of rhythm: first a dull roar just at our backs; then a second, a little fainter, towards the west; then a third, fainter still; and so on, *da capo*, always in three beats; and, through it all, in a higher key, the churning hiss on the sandy isthmus a mile away, where the trees had ceased to grow, and there was nothing but a strip of flat pebbly beach between marsh and lake.

Perhaps the Laird would wake up suddenly and ask the meaning of some obscure German word, and the Skipper would recommend him drowsily to "look it up in the 'Encyclopædia Britannica'" — his stock piece of advice to an inquisitive

family when he is too lazy or too ignorant to answer their questions. Then the Laird and the Englishman would start a heated discussion as to what heading they would find the solution under in that work, and appeal to Candida, who advised them — with what the Cicala called her "tolerant smile" — to consult a German dictionary. And they would turn in pained humiliation to the latter young woman, who was lying on her back gazing at the zenith, and whispering invocations to the "star of her god Rephan." For, generation upon generation ago, and far away up on Mount Ida, she heard the laughter of Pan ripple away into a sigh behind the reeds, and — though she is not in the least aware of the fact — the echoing of it in her ears may yet save her soul alive, when she comes to the parting of the ways on the Road Perilous that shall decide whether she is to remain Cicala, or become merely one of the grasshoppers "under the fern."

The marsh itself was never quite silent: all night we could hear the chattering of the mud-hens, broken occasionally by the distant yapping of a coyote, and the swift answering challenge of the Indians' train-dogs. But it was in the day-time that we realised how teeming with life were the great lagoons that lay before us. When a gun was fired a quarter of a mile off there arose a sudden multitudinous clamour that echoed away out of earshot, as teal and mallard and grebe, gull and merganser, uttered their danger-signals, each in his own

language, till the note of warning had spread—who can tell how far? The Indians and Half-breeds understood their dialects, though they were a little hazy as to the names of the various water-fowl. They could speak them too, and I have repeatedly seen a native hunter arrest and turn birds in mid-flight; and then, when he had secured their attention, bring them right up to him by a quick, backward, semi-circular swing of the hand, palm upwards, among the reeds,—meant to imitate the final flash of the setting wings as the ducks alight. The Indian cannot afford to waste ammunition, and has no scruples about shooting his quarry on the water, his one object being to make sure of an easy shot. Most of them use muzzle-loaders, though one or two, better off than their fellows, will beg you to save your cartridge-cases for them to reload; and one millionaire was the proud possessor of what a certain cowboy—describing a tenderfoot's new hammerless—called “one of them there Polled Angus guns”!

Another bright sunny day we coasted along the shore, all five of us in the big canoe, to visit the prospective site of the Skipper's future shooting-box. We could see the tops of the trees on the island, fifteen miles away or more, always with the mirage line where the trunks should be; landing at the mouth of the little creek on the farther side of the isthmus to visit a half-breed's fishing camp. The wind was blowing from the south,

and the marsh plants in the clear amber water were all waving down-stream; half a dozen cattle had come down to drink and were lying on the sandy spit, too lazy to do anything but chew the cud; and a bronze-blue kingfisher, with a broad white collar round his neck, was contemplating them curiously from the dead tree on the opposite bank. The yellow-legged plover were moving about fearlessly at our feet; and, thirty yards away, two stately blue herons stood at gaze; while the ubiquitous ravens hovered overhead, croaking wrathfully at the disturbers of their mid-day meal. The half-breed had been setting night-lines, baited with frog, for catfish, which are still in demand in Minnesota and North Dakota, though the Manitobans as a rule refuse to eat them. He displayed his last night's catch,—villainous-looking monsters, with round bullet heads and long feelers depending like moustaches from the corners of their jaws, tethered through the gills to keep them alive and fresh till the little steamer from Selkirk called for its weekly cargo. But our noses told us that some of his captives, at all events, had died an untimely death; and we paddled on to our destination, a green clearing among the elms and maples on the main shore. Here we landed, and collected a painful of wild plums and another of filberts; while the Laird camped on the beach, refusing flatly to expose himself to the mosquitoes that swarmed in the rank vegetation inland. We started

the fire, split our duck, and toasted them on long pointed sticks *en bonask*, a mode of cooking which the Skipper professes to enjoy particularly, though it is an insult to the duck. "Bonask," spelt phonetically, is derived from two Cree words meaning "burnt stick"; and the result tastes like it, being horribly suggestive of the pictures of Bulgarian atrocities in the old illustrated papers.

With a stock of flour, tea, sugar, and salt, a camping party can live like princes here, for the lake supplies some twenty-one species of fish, most of which are good eating, especially when they can be transferred from the net to the frying-pan. Then the marsh will provide teal, mallard, and canvas-back; and the mainland, moose, bear, prairie chicken, and partridge. There are wild plums and wild raspberries for preserving, and cranberries for jelly to eat with your moose-steak, when you are lucky enough to have it. We struck up an acquaintance with a certain wizened old rascal of an Indian hunter who could hardly speak a word of English, but whose eyes twinkled with suppressed humour; and he delicately insinuated that he could provide us with "wild beef" if required, though the sale of it is illegal. He had in his canoe strips of *kha-ka-wuk*, or moose meat dried in the smoke of a fire, and looking like old shoe leather, though it tasted excellent; and he accepted gratefully a cake of tobacco, which he proceeded to eke out by

crumbling up shreds of *kinnikinnik*, or the sun-dried inner bark of the red willow. He had been a hunter of big game from his earliest infancy, having begun at the age of five, and was, curiously enough, looked on with some contempt by his duck-hunting relatives, who averred that though he could shoot an animal bigger than a horse by getting close to it, he was no good at all at birds upon the wing. It is difficult to blame the Indians and half-breeds for thriftlessness when one remembers how few are their wants, and how easily they are supplied; for even in winter they can catch all the fish they need by cutting holes in the ice, and run the moose to a standstill on snowshoes when they require change of diet.

Next morning we heard a strange voice talking to the Skipper on the shore, and found a visitor in the person of "the Rev. Mr Hope" (in Anglo-Cree "Hop"), the native pastor of the little church near the bank of the west channel. The old gentleman's appearance would have startled a meeting of the Church Missionary Society at Exeter Hall. He wore a broken-brimmed straw hat, beneath which his long, straight, grizzled hair fell over his shoulders; his face was the colour of *café-au-lait*, with half a dozen deep wrinkles gashed at right angles from the nose towards the ear, and three or four slanting down to the corner of his mouth; but with this exception the skin was extraordinarily smooth.

The beard was grey, forked, and scanty, growing only on the chin, and the nose quite flat between the eyes. His sole garments consisted of a grey flannel shirt, moccasins, and a pair of ragged old tweed trousers, much patched, and held up by string suspenders; his buttons were sporadic. He was accompanied by a sore-eared "husky," whom he evidently treated with far greater consideration than is usually accorded to their dogs by the natives. His accent was rather more cultivated than that of the ordinary Indian, and had a touch of the slightly affected simplicity not uncommon among men of his profession. He would drop this, however, when talking business; and no one could converse with him for ten minutes and carry away any doubt of his perfect sincerity. He was the sole survivor of Sir James Richardson's Arctic expedition in search of Sir John Franklin, and the Skipper was drawing him out on the subject for the benefit of the Laird. The poor old chap had all the native's constitutional aversion to answering a direct question, and it was pathetically funny to see him wriggling under the probing interrogatories of the K.C. Once the latter, eager to elucidate a point of topography, seized the handle of an oar and drew a straight line on the sand, saying, "Now look here, Mr Hope, this is the Mackenzie Delta." But the old man's mind worked in its own way, and he glanced at his inquisitor with a half dis-

dainful curiosity. "That is not the Mackenzie Delta," he said, "that is the Coppermine river," and he went on to draw quite an intelligible map. He told us long stories about the Esquimaux and their dogs, and their short bows bound with sinew which could drive a copper-headed arrow through a plank, and their spears with loose-barbed points. He seemed specially struck by the number of old men among them, saying that he could not have believed that there were so many aged people anywhere in the world, from which one would infer that the half-breeds die early as a rule, or that the signs of senile decay among the Esquimaux are premature. But he certainly reverted to the point again and again, and was himself looked on as a hoary patriarch by his flock, though he claimed to be only seventy-five.

After he had extracted all the information he could, the Skipper carried him off to give him some dinner, putting before him such a meal as he only saw once a-year. A total abstainer, the old padre would not have touched whisky for worlds, but saw no harm in taking a dose of any patent medicine that warmed him up. We were aware of this weakness, and his host poured him out a bumper of paregoric and essence of peppermint, which made him glow all over, while the Englishman stood afar off and laughed consumedly, till he saw him bend his grey head over his plate and ask a blessing on all present. Afterwards the

whole party followed him down to the little church—built entirely by his own hands—among the willows, by the channel. We reached it by a narrow plank bridge, across which we could only walk one at a time; and the Cicala nearly fell off into eighteen inches of water on finding that she was being followed by a string of eleven or twelve “husky” dogs in single file. (The word husky is derived from the Cree *aski*, raw flesh, or fish; “Esquimaux” being from *aski*, and *mowew*, he eats.)

The church was built of boards, partly whitewashed on the inside, and measured about 26 by 12 feet. The pews consisted of six little wooden benches, that would accommodate five persons each if they didn't mind sitting close. A stove and a couple of petroleum lamps, with tin reflectors, completed the furniture of the nave. The chancel was fenced off by a little red and white railing, the remains of an old bedstead; the altar was a plain blue-legged table, with a cloth of maroon sateen, having a cross marked thereon in yellow braid, the reading-desk being covered with similar material. The collection plate was an enamelled tin saucer; and the old man tenderly and reverently displayed the pride of his heart, an electroplate communion chalice and paten, the napkins being carefully packed in a pictured handkerchief box. The girls made him quite happy by promising a new cloth for the reading-desk, with gold fringe and a

cross in the centre; while the Skipper scribbled a memorandum to send him a load of shingles for his new vicarage, which he was also building with his own hands. The service is a short one, consisting generally of a few prayers, read alternately in English and Cree: the congregation is necessarily limited, and a Church of England clergyman comes down twice a-year to administer the Sacrament. We left behind us all the tea and sugar we could spare, together with a bottle of paregoric, and another of somebody's “Ready Relief,” supplemented by a little fresh beef, which he professed to prefer to the wild article (“that's where he makes a moose-steak,” said the little Cicala, thoughtfully); and he told us it was the happiest day in the year to him.

We only had one really wet day during our entire stay, and the shooting suffered somewhat in consequence, as the ducks simply refused to fly in calm, clear weather. Still the mere exercise of paddling day after day and the open-air life made us wonder that more sportsmen do not come out here instead of sticking to the annual routine of grouse-drives and pheasant-battues. The marsh was full of interest and beauty, for on the days that duck were scarce there was never any lack of coots and divers and grebe, with great hawks wheeling overhead, and kingfishers up-reared and checked against the wind, herons stalking in the shallow waters, and flocks of sandpipers, yellow-legged

plover, and robin-breasted snipe along the sandy beach.

Sometimes we would glide round a corner and find a family party of mallards or young "fall-duck" asleep on a mud-bank, looking so peaceful that one almost hesitated to disturb them,—the Indians never being able to understand why we refused to shoot them sitting. Or we would drive the canoe through the tall leaves with quick paddle-strokes to prevent her losing way, and emerge at last on to sunlit fields of sparkling water, where the crested grebe were curtsying up and down, their long white necks erect and alert till we came within gunshot, when they bowed themselves suddenly, disappearing with a swift undulating dive to shoot up again a couple of hundred yards away. One day we saw one of their small cousins, the lesser grebe (locally known as the "hell-diver"), plunge suddenly under with a mighty swirl behind him that made our Indian stop paddling, exclaiming that, once in his life, he had seen a jackfish catch a hell-diver. The luckless bird emerged within forty yards of us, struggling desperately, and then vanished, breaking water for the third and last time so close to the canoe that we could have hit him with the paddle; too close indeed for the Englishman to shoot him, or he might have performed the unusual feat of bagging a fish and a bird with the same cartridge—and been branded as a monumental liar for telling the tale afterwards.

There was the excitement of rowing the *bot* out in the morning, clad in the lightest of attire, and picking up the net, disentangling therefrom big silvery gold-eye, and pickeral, and red-finned sucker, and sun-fish dyed with all the colours of the rainbow; of firing cartridges loaded with granulated sugar or salt at the husky dogs who would come sneaking round the camp at night ready to devour anything they could find, from bacon to boots; of paddling over to the lighthouse to visit its lonely keeper, and climbing into the big lamp to look for the smoke of distant steamers; of returning home at sundown over what we had come to call the Field of the Cloth of Gold, the great stretch of calm water between the west channel and the camp, that lay with never a ripple to mar its stillness, except where some captive fish, struggling in the net, flung up on the surface ringlets of amber and apricot and apple-green.

We let our watches run down at last, from sheer forgetfulness of time, and then spent hours trying to guess how to set them again by the aid of compasses and masts planted in the sand, and diagrams drawn on the dining-room table. We managed to get the north and south line all right by the sun at noon, only to find that we were all wrong by the stars at night, and that the sun set about an hour later than our calculations, based on tattered old newspapers, showed us that it should. Then, when we had made a compromise, the half-breeds would differ from us altogether

—and we had a good deal of respect for their opinion in matters of this kind. But we were thoroughly idle and happy, so what did it matter?

The last day found us all, physically speaking, as hard as nails, and only depressed because we could not stay another month. We altered our arrangements for the return journey, embarking our five selves in the larger of the two canoes, and loading all our baggage into the other and the *bot*, which we intrusted to the Indians.

It was a lovely morning when we shoved off, the Skipper in the stern and the Englishman in the bows, with strict orders to "set the kind of stroke we can keep up all day." As we skirted along the main shore we saw a lonely old figure, surrounded by dogs, sitting just below the little church, waiting to wave us adieu, and with one accord we tossed our paddles in the air in passing salutation. There was a bit of head wind when we turned into the river, and, in spite of the skilful management of our steersman, who took advantage of every inch of lee, the temptation to "hit her up" a little when we were traversing an exposed stretch was irresistible, for what is the use of collecting superfluous energy if you can't use it?

We profited by our recklessness as it turned out, for just after passing the forks we heard a prolonged whistle from the head of the main channel, and caught sight of a big steamer heading up stream. A loud hail made her slow up and offer

to take us on board, and we started across to her with the paddles working like piston-rods. The blue ensign, with the maple leaf below, showed her to be a Government boat, chartered by engineers from Ottawa to take soundings and make a chart of the lake,—a task which has never yet been completed, although Canadian steamers have been running on it for more than twenty years. Still in all that time there has never been a steamboat wrecked nor a life lost by shipwreck or storm, although the lights are far too few, and—to quote the last Board of Trade report—"the Almighty alone made the harbours in which the wharves are built by the fishermen at their own cost."

The same authority lays stress on the fact that the fishing industry is only in its infancy, the total length of licensed net on the lake being only 60,000 yards, while that on Lake Huron is 11 millions!

Still, even as it is, the Dominion Fish Company, with their headquarters in a sandy bay on Selkirk Island, north of the Saskatchewan estuary, managed to export over a hundred car-loads a-year after supplying the local trade.

The Government engineers and their Scandinavian crew hoisted us up bodily, canoe and all, and at once placed the entire ship at our disposal, or, perhaps it would be more correct to say, at that of Candida and the Cicala. They unrolled acres of maps, and spread them out on the deck, and had the temerity to argue with the

Skipper about their own business, and gave us luncheon in the saloon with potatoes and pickles and other luxuries whose existence we had forgotten, so that we acknowledged that people like Candida and Cicala had their uses, occasionally. But all our luggage was three miles away on the Ethel-Dasy and the red canoe, and not even the Government engineers could wait for them to come up, so that we arrived in Selkirk tanned and tattered and torn, and had to spend a long afternoon and evening waiting for clean clothes.

It took us some time to get into the little ways of civilisation: we had hardly been ten minutes in the town when the Laird wrathfully accused the Skipper of being more dangerous opening soda-water than a thunderstorm in a leaky tent. When the luggage did arrive it was too late to unpack it, so we passed the evening in a private sitting-room of the little hotel, refusing ourselves to callers.

Next morning we hired a big excursion brake instead of returning by train, and transferred to it everything except the canoes: we lined it with blankets and waterproof rolls of tents and clothing till we had converted it into a kind of divan on wheels, and agreed that it was the most comfortable carriage we had ever driven in, though they might have stared at us a little near Hyde Park Corner about 7 P.M. in the height of the season. Even under the circumstances we were not sorry that we did not reach our final destination until after dark. The following evening we had all returned to civilised raiment, and the men were contemptuously greeted as "dudes" by a couple of bronzed nymphs attired in white muslin with exquisitely fitting gloves of *peau-de-suède*. But I think that the memory of our three weeks on Lake Winnipeg will endure long after the last vestiges of tan and sunburn have passed away.

CHARLES HANBURY-WILLIAMS.

NEVER MARRIED.¹

BY MOIRA O'NEILL.

MY mother had three daughters, an' the ouldest one was me,
The other two was married in their youth;
'Tis well for them that likes it, but by all that I could see
It 'ud never fit meself, an' there's the truth.

Oh, never think I'm wantin' to miscall the race o' men,
There' ne'er a taste o' harm in them, the cratures!
They're meddlesome an' quarrelsome an' throublesome, — but
then
The Man Above He put it in their natures.

I'd never be uncivil, sure an' marriage must be right,
Or what 'ud bring the childer to the fore?
Wi' their screechin' an' their roarin' an' *balorin'* day an'
night,—
Me sister Ann has five, an' Jane has more.

I couldn't work wi' childer, an' the men's a bigger kind,
But muddy an' mischeevous like the small;
Ye've got to larn them betther, an' ye've got to make them
mind,
An' ye've got to keep them aisy afther all.

I'm betther' doin' wi' dumb things, a weeny black-face lamb,
Or the yaller goosey-goslin's on the knowe;
The neighbours think I'm sensible wi' sick ones, so I am,—
Sure 'twas me that saved the life o' Mullen's cow.

Aye, ye'll often hear them say a woman cannot bide her lone,
An' it's fifty years alone that I have bided;
They're very apt to say no woman yet could guide her own,
But them that God guides is well guided.

¹ Copyright in the U.S.A. by Moira O'Neill.

HER SISTER.¹

BY MOIRA O'NEILL.

"BRIGID is a caution, sure." What's that ye say?
 Is it my sister then, Brigid MacIlray?
 Caution or no caution, listen what I'm tellin' ye—
Childer, hould yer noise there, faix! there' no quellin' ye,—
 Och well, I've said it now this many a long day,
 'Tis the quare pity o' Brigid MacIlray.

An' she that was the beauty, an' never married yet,
 An' fifty years gone over her; but do ye think she'll fret?
 Sorra one o' Brigid then, that's not the sort of her,—
 Ne'er a hate would *she* care though not a man had thought
 of her.

Heaps o' men she might 'a had—*Here, get out o' that,*
Mick ye rogue! desthroyin' o' the poor ould cat.

Ah, no use o' talkin'! Sure a woman's born to wed,
 An' not go wastin' all her life by waitin' till she's dead;
 Haven't we the men to mind, that couldn't for the lives o' them
 Keep their right end uppermost only for the wives o' them?—
Stick to yer pipe, Tim, an' give me no talk now!
There's the door fore'nenst ye, man; out ye can walk now.

Brigid, poor Brigid, will never have a child,
 An' she you'd think a mother born, so gentle an' so mild—
Danny, is it puttin' little Biddy's eyes out yer afther,
Swishin' wid yer rod there, an' splittin' wid yer laughter?
Come along the whole o' yez, in out o' the wet,
Or may I never but ye'll soon see what ye'll get!

She to have no man at all,—Musha, look at Tim!
Off an' up the road he is, an' wet enough to swim,
An' his tea sittin' waitin' on him, there he'll sthreele about now,—
Amn't I the heart-scalded woman out an' out now?
Here I've lived an' wrought for him all the ways I can,
But the goodness grant me patience, for I'd need it wid that man.

What was I sayin' then? Brigid lives her lone,
 Ne'er a one about the house, quiet as a stone.
Lave a-go the pig's tail, boys, and quet the squealin' now,
Mind I've got a sally switch that only wants the peelin' now.—
 Ah, jist to think of her, 'deed an' well-a-day!
 'Tis the quare pity o' Brigid MacIlray.

¹ Copyright in the U.S.A. by Moira O'Neill.

JONES OF PANNMAEN.

IF now and again it must have been galling to the feelings of one of little Miss La Creevy's sitters to find himself or herself presented to the public with the nose of a perfect stranger, far more annoying was it to young Oliver Jones of Pannmaen to discover that he had temporarily lost his individuality by going to Jesus College, Oxford. In high circles in Carmarthenshire Oliver Jones, senior, of Pannmaen, was accounted, if not exactly the only Jones, at any rate the one and only Jones really worth knowing or even worth thinking about. Not to know Jones of Pannmaen was to argue yourself unknown. For to men and women in those parts Jones of Pannmaen was fully as distinctive a title as Napier of Magdala or Kitchener of Khartoum; and possibly neither of the illustrious warriors whose names have been quoted could lay claim to so lengthy a pedigree as could the stout Welsh squire, in comparison with whom men whose ancestors had come over with Norman William were but as *novi homines*. For the Joneses of Pannmaen traced their descent back to no less a personage than Morgan La Fay, and, if they had had their rights, ought—so at least runs the tradition—to be the Royal Family of Wales at this very moment.

It was a part of the squire of Pannmaen's creed that Wales

was the first country in the world, and that he who had the good fortune to be born and bred within the limits of the Principality should never for a moment forget that he was a *bonâ fide* Welshman. There being, as it happens, no very famous public school in Wales, young Oliver, the heir of Pannmaen, had been in due course sent to Eton, but so soon as the question of his going on to a university arose, his father had decided that Jesus College, Oxford, should enjoy the privilege of numbering the future Jones of Pannmaen among its alumni.

And it was at the commencement of his university career that Oliver awoke to the fact that outside the college walls, save only among his old school-friends, he had temporarily lost his identity. In the country he was still "young Jones of Pannmaen," a citizen of no mean city; at Eton he had been "Jones of Evans's," who had got his field-colours, thus easily distinguishable from other members of the great Jones brotherhood, who were neither in Evans's house nor had got their field-colours. But here at Oxford, if any of his old Eton acquaintances introduced him to stranger undergraduates, he was simply "Jones of Jesus," a title of which eight other young men were equally with himself the possessors. Nor did it altogether add to his complacency to find that it seemed to be

accepted as a matter of course by the outside world that if he hailed from Jesus his name must be Jones, or to overhear a stranger whom he met in some rooms at Christ Church confidently asserting that the community of Jesus was wholly made up of Joneses.

"Well, most of them are, anyhow," remarked the stranger, when some one ventured to doubt the correctness of the generalisation. "I happen to know that as a matter of fact."

"How do you know?"

"Because the first term I came up I walked into the quad about lunch-time and yelled out 'Jones' at the top of my voice, and I give you my word of honour that every man-jack in the place looked out of his window. The whole shop was alive with them."

To be sure, Oliver knew that this was a sorry exaggeration; but, after all, nine men of the same name is rather more than a fair allowance for one small college.

For a week or two, then, our young friend was inclined to be considerably annoyed with his father for having insisted upon planting him in a sort of hotbed of Welshmen who spoke the Queen's English in an unmistakably Cambrian dialect, and so many of whom claimed his own patronymic. Being, however, a sensible fellow as young men go, Oliver did not allow the grievance to weigh upon his spirits or to affect his appetite, and shortly lost the sense of having a grievance at all. To be sure, if he had

been allowed his choice of colleges, he would have elected to take up his habitation at New or University in preference to Jesus; but as his father had definitely settled that question for him, it was clearly his wisest course to make the best of existing circumstances. And when he came to look about him, he found plenty of small mercies for which to be thankful. His rooms were distinctly good, the cooking was in most respects not much worse, in others even better, than that in other colleges, the authorities were fairly lenient in the matter of petty regulations, and there was no obligation laid upon him as a commoner, to pledge himself to go in for honours in any particular school. He was even given to understand that any young man who chose to behave like a sensible Christian, and at stated periods satisfied the requirements of the pass examiners, was heartily welcome to date his letters from Jesus College, Oxford, for a period of three, four, or even five years.

"Of course, of course, Mr — eh — Jones," explained the worthy Principal, "we—ahem, the College that is, might—eh—prefer that our young men should go in for an—eh—honour school; but in your case, Mr Jones, as that most—eh—excellent gentleman your father is not particularly anxious on the subject, and your own—eh—future is not likely to suffer one way or the other, well indeed—ahem—you can please yourself. Of course you will—eh—keep your chapels and attend your lectures—eh—regularly,

and not knock in too late at night, and generally—eh—conform to the college regulations, and eh—ahem—well, I need not detain you any further. Good morning, Mr Jones.”

Then again the undergraduate section of in-college society was equally prepared to accept our hero on his own terms, and to be distantly—it might even be added respectfully—civil to him, and not to expect too much civility in return. It was not natural to suppose that “young Jones of Pannmaen,” who had been more or less a man of mark at Eton, and in virtue of his celebrity had what might be called a ready-made circle of out-college acquaintances, would make many intimate friends in college, or feel himself called upon to be hail-fellow-well-met with all the common or garden members of the Jones tribe. And later on, as the young man showed no trace of “side,” but always had a pleasant smile and a courteous word for any member of the college with whom he came into contact, occasionally dined in hall, and now and again interchanged small acts of hospitality with a few fellow-collegians, he took rank as quite a popular member of society. It was felt, too, that in his case there would be no occasion to requisition the services of the redoubtable Ted Tum, to whose high position it appertained to provide appropriate names of distinction—agnomina we might call them—for the ordinary Joneses and other freshmen.

A few words about Ted Tum, who was in the Jesus College

circle a very distinguished character. What a Homeric hero was to the ordinary Greek of the time of Pericles, that and something more than that was Ted Tum—*Anglicè* Edward Thomas—to the commonplace undergraduate of Oliver’s standing. In the first place, Ted Tum was the senior undergraduate on the college books—so very senior, indeed, that his own contemporaries had long since shaken the dust of Oxford off their feet and gone their ways into the world as lawyers, parsons, country squires, or what not. Indeed, for many years past Ted Tum himself had lived on his own little property in Glamorganshire, only coming up to Oxford twice a-year for a fortnight at a time to renew his futile attempts to secure the solitary *testamur* that stood between himself and a university degree.

“Please, sir, what be I to do with it?” inquired the mighty John Ridd, when he suddenly found himself knighted.

And what, it might fairly be asked, was Ted Tum to do with a university degree? What possible advantage could this most expensively won and yet—in the ordinary walks of life—most useless and most unmarketable commodity confer upon a small Welsh squire? Well, in the first place, Ted Tum’s efforts to obtain that final *testamur* were prompted by a not unworthy sentiment—a fact that was well known to, and appreciated by, the college authorities. Ted’s father had, as it were, risen from the ranks, having made so shrewd a use of

his opportunities in the golden days of farming as to become a small landowner; and then he had set his heart upon his late-born and only son taking a university degree, which—for so the old man thought—would carry with it a diploma of gentility. So far so good; but, in the second place, it must be owned that Ted Tum, who in some ways retained an effervescing amount of juvenility, dearly loved the excuse for revisiting his old haunts, where he felt equally at home, whether buzzing a bottle of old port with the bursar, sampling a tankard of ale with some undergraduate acquaintance, or smoking a pipe with the old lame porter, who had kept the gate in the days when the world was young and Ted Tum himself the rowdiest freshman in college. To one and all a visit from the senior undergraduate was equally refreshing, for there was about the man an almost overpowering kind of *bonhomie* which carried its own welcome with it, and a power of adapting himself to any company, which in Jesus College at any rate commended him to all grades of society. Living upon easy and familiar terms of intercourse with the ruling dons, who invariably contrived to lend him a set of rooms for the time being, Ted made it his practice to keep up his friendship with successive generations of undergraduates, talking to them as naturally about the sayings and doings of the young men of his own generation as he talked to the bursar, who was like himself

a Glamorganshire man, about matters of interest in the great coal county. That to the lads fresh from school this hero of a hundred fights should, like the pious Æneas, have spun yarns on matters *quorum pars magna fui*, was only what might be expected; and, most of us being in the trustful days of youth inclined to hero-worship in default of softer forms of idolatry, small wonder that Ted Tum's fame stood at least as high in Jesus College as ever did that of the long-winded Trojan in the broad fields of Latium. The true fact that Ted Tum had rowed for two days in a trial eight lent colour to the myth that he had been offered a seat in the 'Varsity; that he was privileged to speak of a gentleman who had been President of the O.U.B.C. in the Homeric age as "Billy," was proof positive that he had in his day been hand in glove with the recognised rulers of the people. And indeed the great man himself rather fostered the tradition by narrating twice in the course of every year a story of some riot in which "Billy" and he had figured as special constables, and had overthrown respectively their thousands and ten thousands. It was the latter number apparently which represented his personal share of the achievement; but then the narrator would modestly explain that as "Billy" was a public character, and on that account could hardly be expected to court a black eye or a broken nose, it had been amicably settled between the two cham-

pions that "Billy" was to content himself with skirmishing in the rear while Ted Tum fought in the forefront of the battle.

Such, then, was the potentate to whom by common consent and from time immemorial had been delegated the onerous and yet delicate duty of providing the successive generations of Joneses, Evanses, Thomases, and Lewises who people the old Welsh College with distinguishing titles. And it may be said that Ted Tum showed an amount of ingenuity in the matter of nomenclature which contrasted favourably with his efforts to convince successive boards of unsympathetic examiners that he was an authority on the subject of Political Economy. Yet even there, according to his own account, he had been hardly dealt with on one occasion, when he claimed that he had merited a *testamur* on the ground that he had given a full, perfect, and sufficient solution of the first, and consequently the most important, of some eight conundrums.

Question. Have you noticed any peculiarity in your textbook? If so, state what that peculiarity is.

Ted Tum's Answer. Yes, I have. There is never a single question asked out of it.

Whereas the bulk of the Jones contingent resident in Oliver's time had been duly christened by Ted Tum, that individual showed a very proper reverence for great names by simply remarking, when Oliver's name was brought up in due

course, that any South Welshman who did not know the difference between a "Jones of Pannmaen" and every other Jones ought to be kicked out of the country.

"Dom it all, mun, there wass a Jones of Pannmaen before ever Noah built his ark."

"And how wass it, then, that he wass not drowned in the flood?" inquired an irreverent youth who hailed from the depths of Pembrokeshire.

"What wass you call yourself, mun?" inquired Ted Tum, looking the last speaker up and down.

"It wass little Johnnie Davies up to Clynderwen, brother of old Beel Davies who kept up number four five years back," volunteered some one.

Ted Tum took his pipe out of his mouth and nodded two or three times solemnly. Then addressing the company at large he remarked with a sigh—

"Who'd have ever thought now that old Beel Davies, who was a decent fellow enough himself, would have had a brother called Johnnie with a face like a gooze?" And "Johnnie with-a-face-like-a-gooze" the young man remained throughout his university career.

To return, however, to Oliver. About three weeks before the end of the term that gentleman received a letter from his father containing the following postscript:—

"I had a word with Tom Jones of Glenboccan yesterday, and he told me that he had got a son at Jesus. As he is my only tenant who has never asked for a reduction, and is a

worthy old fellow into the bargain, it might be as well if you would show the lad some civility. It is rather annoying that they should have given him our name—Oliver—but I suppose that it was well meant.”

An inquiry at the porter's lodge elicited the information that Oliver Jones the 2nd—or, as he had been in residence for some terms, perhaps it should have been Oliver Jones the 1st—at any rate, the other Oliver Jones was an individual who lived in a ground-floor room of the same staircase as his namesake, and was commonly known in college as “Scrotch Jones.”

“Well, sir,” explained the porter when questioned as to the origin of the title, “I think it do be because he do be always scratching for they schools. Mr Scrotch Jones he do have been up here a year or more, and he have never been in for his Little-go yet, so Mr Edward Thomas he do say as his name is Scrotch.”

Scrotch Jones, on being interviewed, turned out to be a hard-featured young fellow of the Welsh farmer type, very Welshy and very bucolic, painfully nervous and much embarrassed at first because Jones of Pannmaen had chosen to seek his acquaintance. However, under the influence of Oliver's friendly manner he grew to be more at his ease, and later on, having been once and a second time invited to breakfast by the young squire, even waxed confidential.

“You're in for Smalls too this term, are you not?” inquired the host.

“Yes, mun, I've never been in before. It wass three times now that I scrotched.”

“What's the good of scratching?”

Scrotch hastened to explain that according to the custom of the college only three *bond fide* attempts were permitted for any one school, but “scratching,” if not carried to excess, was a venial offence.

“But Mr Vice-Principal,” he concluded with a sigh, “he do be saying that if I wass to scrotch again, he will be for sending me down.”

“What makes you scratch, Jones?” inquired Oliver; “don't you know your books or what?”

“Wass it the books, mun?” exclaimed Scrotch in high contempt. “The books” (these were, of course, those especially recommended by the college, two plays of Euripides and some Virgil on which there were daily lectures), “I wass knowing them by heart, and I'm none that bad, so Mr Morris Owen he deed say, at the parsing, and the mathematics they iss perfect. But it iss the pross, mun, it wass awful. Arnold and Henry, they iss plain, they iss sentences and staups, but the pross they do be setting in those examinations is tremenjous, there iss no staups at all, it wass all one piece.”

“But you can break it up into sentences, my good fellow, and then tack it all together afterwards. Look here a moment,” and with that Oliver picked up a set of old Responsions papers and then and there proceeded to illustrate the art of resolving a bit

of consecutive prose into its component parts. It was the first time in his life that he had ever posed as a teacher, but he made by no means a bad job of it. Having spent a full year in the Sixth Form at Eton, he was a fairly good scholar, and being at once patient and clear-headed, succeeded in giving to his pupil more efficient aid in the matter of smoothing out the difficulties of converting a simple English passage into grammatical Latin than the latter had ever before received.

"Deed, mun, you wass a grand teacher," as he gazed at the result of half an hour's work, "and to think that a Jones of Pannmaen would be teaching such as me to do pross."

"Well, come up any morning and have another lesson," said Oliver good-naturedly as he took leave of his guest; "if you don't come, you know, I shall come and rout you out."

The other sensibly availed himself more than once of the invitation; and from that day forward he would have been a rash man who ventured in Scotch's hearing to assert that young Oliver Jones of Pannmaen was anything but the very finest fellow in Christendom.

In due course the schools were opened, and the paper-work began and ended.

"How did the prose go, Jones?" inquired Oliver on the morning after the examination.

"Well, mun, I'm no' that sure, but I'll be thinking I may screape, and that'll be better than scotchng. There wass

'non dubium est quin' three times, mun, and twice 'quominus' with the subjunctive. And I had broke it all up into little sentences, and then—well, I wass in a great hurry at the end, and I wass have no time to make a fair copy."

Oliver felt dubious, but hoped for the best, and meantime offered to go through their books—fortunately they were both offering the same—with his namesake in the interval between the paper-work and the *viva voce*.

The schools being divided for *viva voce* purposes, A to K, and L to Z, the two Jones candidates were almost the last men in on the final day. Scotch, who in virtue of his seniority faced the ordeal first, was let off so easily by the examiners that opinions in college were divided as to whether he was a certain pass or a certain plough,—the Job's comforters, who were in a majority, favouring the latter idea. Oliver, on the other hand, was subjected to a very lengthy cross-questioning at the hands of a young examiner, who seemed to be rather astonished than otherwise by the fluency of his translations and the readiness with which he answered sundry questions on contractions.

"You seem to know your books very thoroughly, Mr Jones," observed the examiner after rather a long pause, during which he had been hunting for a paper. "I need not trouble you with those any more, but—ah, let me see," and having found the missing paper, he suddenly turned round and

whispered to the elderly examiner who was sitting next to him. The latter glanced at Oliver and shook his head; but on the first man writing a few words on a slip of paper, a whispered dialogue ensued between the pair, with the result that after much frowning and head-shaking the older man seemed to give an unwilling consent to some course of action which his colleague had been urging.

"Oh, very well then," he said aloud, accompanying the words with a shrug of the shoulders which seemed to imply that he washed his hands of the transaction and declined to hold himself responsible for his colleague's vagaries.

"Well, now, Mr Jones," resumed the latter, looking at the paper in front of him, "you seem to be very fond of the—what shall I call it?—rather hackneyed phrase, 'non dubium est quin'—three times over it occurs."

In a moment Oliver grasped what was going to happen—he was to be called to account for Scrotch's eccentricities; and in the same moment he made up his mind that he would accept the position that was offered to him. If the worst came to the worst, and he found himself plucked for Responsions, it would not make much difference to himself in the long-run, while with poor Scrotch it was clearly a case of now or never.

Skilfully shelving the question of his own likes or dislikes, he blandly remarked that Cicero had occasionally used the phrase, and quoted a passage from that

author in support of his statement.

The examiner first opened his eyes, and then smiled.

"This piece of prose is hardly in the style of Cicero, Mr Jones."

This being a slightly equivocal term, might be held to apply equally well to the Latin or the English version: it suited Oliver's book to take it as applying to the latter.

"No, sir; of course it is more like a bit of Cæsar, but Cæsar uses the phrase too," and he quoted again.

"Quite correct, Mr Jones, but even Cæsar would have varied it occasionally,—but we will let that pass. How do you defend this?" and he proceeded to read aloud another of Scrotch's disconnected monstrosities.

Once again fortune and memory came to Oliver's aid, and, considerably to the examiner's amusement, he quoted something like a parallel construction from Cæsar.

"Dear me, yes, that is so, Mr Jones—at the same time, however," here he hesitated—"Well, I think you may go now, Mr Jones," and Oliver found himself dismissed in an absolute state of uncertainty how far his own efforts had been successful in lightening the load of Scrotch's iniquities.

For a full hour beyond the usual time on that last day of the schools did the clerk wait in vain for the usual batch of *testamurs*, and many were the imprecations heaped on the heads of the examiners by anxious and expectant candi-

dates. And all that time four of the cleverest men in Oxford were sitting in an inner chamber, fagged out and hungry, engaged in futile attempts to unravel the veil which shrouded the identity of two individuals who claimed the name Oliver Jones and hailed from Jesus.

Bogle of Corpus was the chief obstructionist, being at once conscientious, pompous, suspicious, and irritable. The conscientiousness and pomposity were natural characteristics; the suspiciousness and irritability results—so gay young bachelors said—of his having married a very pretty and very silly woman, many years younger than himself and much addicted to flirtation. As Bogle's opinion on most subjects was held, even by learned professors, to be well worth hearing, it may save some trouble in the way of introduction to give his opinion on the merits of his three fellow-examiners in Responses. Harter of Johns, then, was a very fine scholar, but flippant and irreverent to a degree; Miles of Magdalen was an inconsequent jackanapes; Gerard of Worcester a great mathematician, doubtless, but absolutely devoid of a vestige of common-sense.

From the severity of these judgments it may readily be inferred that Mr Bogle was in the habit of taking a somewhat jaundiced view of society at large.

There were two very delicate questions before the House, the first and most important being, Which was which Mr Oliver

Jones? the second, Whether that Mr Oliver Jones who had shown up what Bogle chose to term "drivelling twaddle" in lieu of Latin prose was entitled to receive a *testamur*? Harter, who was on the side of mercy, was inclined to merge the two questions into one and solve the real Gordian knot by the simple process of issuing two *testamurs*.

"That," pronounced Bogle decisively, "simply amounts to shirking a responsibility. We've got to do two separate and distinct things. One is to find out which is the right Mr Jones, and then, when we have signed a *testamur* for him, to consider the question, whether that marvellous scholarship and power of research"—this very ironically—"which Harter has professed to have discovered in the other man should be allowed to weigh against the production of this—stuff. Eh, what do you say?" turning round sharply on Gerard, who had ventured to make a remark.

"All I said was that I foresaw the difficulty when I was looking over the Euclid," replied Gerard, "and as soon as I found there were two men of the same name from the same college I marked them A and B, as you may see, for your guidance."

"Which is A and which is B, then?"

"Well, do you know, as I have not seen the men, I am not quite clear in my own mind, but there is a great deal of difference between the handwriting."

"Very helpful, indeed; most

kind of you, I am sure, Gerard," exclaimed Bogle in high irony. "Your assistance, or guidance as I think you called it, is most valuable."

"Perhaps the right Mr Jones—I mean," very hastily correcting himself, "the wrong Mr Jones—was not quite himself when he wrote that prose," suggested Miles, undeterred by the snubbing which Gerard had just received.

"Not quite himself," snapped Bogle; "do you mean that he was the other Mr Jones? oh, ill, you say—very ill, indeed, I should imagine," sardonically, "when he perpetrated this,"—here he crumpled up the prose paper. "He ought to have been dead and buried if he had had his deserts."

Conversation languished for a minute or two after this, and was only revived by a remark of Gerard's that Jones was a very common name indeed, especially in Wales, but that Oliver Jones was not a very ordinary combination.

"Oliver Jones," repeated Harter thoughtfully, "Oliver Jones—the name seems familiar enough to me—oh, I've got it, there's an Oliver Jones at Pan—something in Wales, a rare old squire who gave my sister's husband some of the very best woodcock-shooting he ever had."

"Should you call that a sufficient reason for giving his son a *testamur*, Mr Harter?" inquired Bogle with severity.

"Possibly I might," replied the other, who had no intention of being put into his proper place by Bogle or anybody else.

Rather to the surprise of his colleagues, who had anticipated another explosion from the senior examiner, the latter now suddenly started on a fresh line of his own.

"There is an Oliver Jones of Pannmaen."

"That's the place," interpolated Harter.

"There is an Oliver Jones of Pannmaen, who is, as I was going to say when you interrupted me, Harter, a very great authority on Celtic roots."

"Then it was his son I vivaed," exclaimed Miles confidently; "he looked and talked like a Celtic root."

Bogle frowned majestically and then resumed in his most didactic manner—

"A Celtic root, my good Miles, is a very beautiful——"

"Then it wasn't the man, it must have been the other. Mine was a very plain-featured individual: what was your fellow like, Harter?"

"Looked and spoke like a gentleman," said Harter shortly.

At this juncture a happy idea occurred to Gerard.

"Don't you think the simplest plan would be to send a note to the Dean of Jesus and ask him which Mr Jones is—is——" here he hesitated.

"The son of the man who gave Harter's brother-in-law the shooting?" suggested Miles.

"Or Bogle's Celtic-root man," interpolated Harter.

"No, no; which is the right, I mean the wrong Mr Jones, the one I mean who—eh—eh—writes like a crab."

This proposal, which really sounded hopeful, was at once

nipped in the bud by Bogle, who having had sundry passages at arms with the Dean of Jesus in Convocation, was hardly on speaking terms with that gentleman.

"I shall not give my consent to anything of the sort," he answered with decision. "We are quite capable, I hope, of carrying out our duties to the university without any assistance from the Dean of Jesus, thank you, Gerard."

"Oh, I forgot that you did not like him," murmured Gerard apologetically.

"There's nothing to like or dislike about the man—he's a chattering nonentity, wrong-headed too," was the reply.

"Well, the Vice-Principal then, shall we try him?"

No, Bogle would not hear of the Vice-Principal either. While he graciously admitted that the Vice-Principal of Jesus was a very worthy man in his way, he doubted whether he knew the difference between a piece of Latin prose and a piece of plum-pudding.

Fortunately for all parties, just as it began to appear as if the discussion would be indefinitely prolonged, first one clock struck the hour, and then half a dozen others followed suit.

"Bless my heart!" exclaimed Bogle, looking at his watch, "four o'clock!"—his wife had some men coming to tea at half-past four. "Four o'clock,—we can't go on like this for ever;" and then, as he suddenly recollected that the last elected Fellow of Corpus, a most—to the feminine way of thinking—

attractive young man, was to be a member of that tea-party, he suddenly came round to Harter's original proposition, being, however, careful to take the whole merit of the initiative upon himself.

"I think, gentlemen," he announced with magisterial dignity, "that under the circumstances, as we are confronted, that is, with a very unusual, and I may say very uncalled for, difficulty, for which no provision has been made in the statutes, the merits of the case may be met by our assigning one *testamur* to the first Mr Oliver Jones, in whose case there can be no doubt, and then issuing another to the second Mr Oliver Jones, who may be said to have partially atoned in his *viva voce* examination for the shortcomings in his—eh—paper-work. The situation, we may suppose, is not likely to recur."

The motion—to which every one in the room except the latest proposer had been ready to assent an hour ago—was carried *nem. con.*, a plaintive protest from Miles, that even now he did not quite know which was the first and which the second Mr Jones, being, like Gerard's happy thought—that they should mark the *testamurs* as he had originally marked the Euclid papers A and B—received by Bogle with chilly and disapproving silence.

At seven o'clock that evening from a ground-floor room in Jesus a cheery voice was heard to shout—

"Common—roo—oom! Common—roo—oom! Four tan-

kards of peer and the pasket!"¹ from which it may be inferred that "Scrotch" was purposed to do the wetting of the *testamur* right royally.

No more *testamurs*, alas! ever fell to the wrong Mr Oliver Jones's share. Two years later that gentleman finally quitted Oxford, and, it being manifestly unsuitable that an ex-Oxonian should *more patrum* follow the plough, embarked upon a commercial career.

At this day there is a little drapery shop in the market-town of Llandilo, kept by one Oliver Jones, who passes as a man of letters among his fellow-citizens. For in the back parlour hangs on the wall a document, duly glazed and framed, to convince the doubting mind that in the days of his youth Oliver Jones was educated at Oxford College.

He is a warm man, too, is Mr Jones, and a busy man to boot. But once a-week he may be seen standing for an hour if need be at his shop-door, waiting for the Pannmaen carriage to pass, and the squire, who

drives the finest pair of horses in the county, never fails to turn his head and shout in his cheery voice, "Morning, Scrotch, old fellow."

And if some curious neighbour chooses to inquire why Oliver Jones of Pannmaen always calls him "Scrotch," Oliver the draper has an answer ready.

"It do be a joke of the squire,—he have called me Scrotch ever since the days when we wass at college together."

How far exactly Oliver Jones the draper was indebted to Jones of Pannmaen for that *testamur* is known only to the latter to this day. For it is prudent on some occasions for a man to be his own confidant, and yet—to say that you would cut off your right hand to serve a friend is a figure of speech—if by the loss of every one of his own limbs Oliver Jones the draper could do Oliver Jones of Pannmaen a good turn, well then, "By George, mun, he's welcome to the lot, and indeed I'm sorry there wass not more of them."

¹ The "basket" was an institution, peculiar I believe to Jesus College, which enabled the frugal-minded undergraduate to provide his guests with a moderately good dessert at cost price.

BYRON, 1816-1824.

It was in 'Maga' of November 1899 that the first three volumes of Mr Murray's new edition of Byron's 'Letters and Journals' were discussed, and it was not until the middle of this October that the sixth and last volume was published. The dates suggest, first of all, the great labour involved in the editing, and it is pleasant to offer Mr Rowland Prothero a sincere compliment on its most successful completion. But they also suggest a certain weakness in this prevalent method of publishing a great work. To read a volume of Byron's letters is to desire the next at once. Life is complex, and the making of books is both endless and continuous: the reader cannot remain in the right atmosphere all the months of waiting, and although when they are over he may need to make but a slight effort to regain his attitude and interest, an ordinary memory at least will have let slip some minutiae it had been well to keep. Would not a true lover of such good cheer have been content to go hungry till the feast was really ready? In this case there was an especial disadvantage in the delay. Of the very few objections made against Mr Prothero on the former occasion, the most important was that, except in a very general way, he had not told us which was new material and which old. He was undisturbed by the criticism, and

now appears his justification. At the end of vol. vi. is a table of the letters, giving their sources, and indicating which of them had been already published by Thomas Moore or Halleck—whose edition added seventy-four given to the world in the meantime by Dallas and Leigh Hunt, or used but not numbered by Moore. All's well that ends well; but the painful student sadly missed that table in reading volumes one to five. Probably there are important publishing reasons, beyond the understanding of a mere reader of books, why such a work cannot be given him all at once, but the humble plaint may be allowed to stand.

All that was said in praise of the first half of the edition may be said of the second: with greater force, indeed, since the opportunities for excellence were more. There are 500 new letters in the six volumes, there is other new material of great interest, and material old, but scattered and obscure, has been usefully collected. Examples of these merits will appear in the course of this essay, if I may be allowed as before to express my views about Byron, which this new edition has suggested or strengthened. Mr Prothero's notes have continued to be models of completeness. He has considered—rightly, it is probable, though some people may find the result a little too abundant—the reader who

needs to know every possible date, the source of every quotation, the precise act and scene in which even the most familiar of Shakespeare's sentences appear, and the whole history of every person mentioned or adumbrated in the text. What this means in the case of over a thousand letters, written nearly a hundred years ago by a man of Byron's variousness of interests, allusive habit, and immense reading, may be seen, but can hardly be imagined without seeing. Mr Prothero gives a list of the authors quoted by Byron, and there are eight columns of them. And here is an instance of Mr Prothero's care. Byron refers (in vol. v.) to his wife as "*Vittoria Carambana the White Devil*," whereon Mr Prothero gives you an account of Webster's play, "*The White Devil*," quotes Charles Lamb's criticism of it, and relates the historical facts on which it was founded. Such a system of annotation, though it may give more than is strictly relevant, certainly adds a mass of instruction to the book. But with it all Mr Prothero never confuses the reader, and never, as your voluminous commentator is too apt to do, shirks the really difficult points. He is to be complimented also in another regard. His asterisks are very few, Byron's plain speaking considered; he has not hesitated to print words supposed to be banished from "polite society." Any critic who complains of Byron's "coarseness" should remember that Englishmen educated at public schools and universities

generally use plain words in speaking to one another when the plain words express their sense, and are apt to look upon the periphrases of a certain kind of refinement as rather silly. But coarse or not, the thing is to have Byron as he wrote. For my part I regret such asterisks as there are, because Byron's letters are not for the school-room, and they give an undue importance to the words omitted: besides, the words might have been interesting for the history of colloquial English. But the difficulties of an editor in this matter are obvious.

In writing of so complex an affair as the character of a man, to say nothing of a Byron, I think an essayist is ill-advised if he limit himself too strictly to divisions of periods and qualities. He may be clear in the particular, but is likely to be contradictory and dubious in the whole. In Byron as he was between 1816 and 1824 we may see three main periods—the Venice, the Guiccioli, the expedition to Greece—in which one side of him or another is the most apparent. But it is the same complex Byron in all three, and the reader will forgive me if, after touching on these periods, I go freely to and fro, taking those incidents in his life and those passages in his letters which seem to me most to help us in realising him. I will write very briefly of the Venice dissipation, because such periods in a great man's life are apt to be given a false importance. But I am writing of the man; and even

in regard to the poet, it is much to the point in the case of one who wrote passionately of love, and cynically of women, to know if he was a rake or a celibate. My opinion of Byron's life in this respect is that one time or another he may have been rather more dissolute than the average men of his class at the same ages, and that on the whole he was about the same as they were and are. It was the custom in his lifetime—echoed since—to talk of him as a libertine, as having “exhausted every species of vice,” and so forth. It was to play with words and mistake them for things. How could a man who died at thirty-six and left behind him such a mass of written work—the quality even apart—as did Byron—to say nothing of his reading, and Mr Prothero's eight columns of authors—be a libertine, steeped in vice and the rest of it? Or, if we consider the quality of his work, where are the signs of the weakening of intellect which such extravagance of vice as has been laid at Byron's door must produce? If one thing is certain about his work, it is that in width and grasp of intellect it waxed tenfold after he left England, and was strong to the end. But it is quite true that he dissipated in Venice. His letters about Marianna Segate and Margarita Cogni prove it. I am far from affirming that every young man under thirty dissipates now and then; but I do affirm that of very many young men of Byron's antecedents and traditions.

Only it is not talked about; it is ever known, it is forgotten; whereas in Byron's case every jabbering traveller to Italy thirsted to hear and repeat anything to Byron's discredit; his friends moralised about it, his enemies howled over it, and he himself, alas! was only too ready to admit it. To the end of his days he could not break himself of the habit of stuffing the credulous with fables about himself, as Medwin's depositions remain to prove. Then consider the circumstances. He had been driven out of England, ostracised from most of the society of his class, on an absurdly inadequate pretext: was, in fact, in the condition of mind in which the facile consolations of Mariannas and Margaritas, to a warm-blooded young man with thwarted affections, are a most potent temptation. And he was living in a city where such a life as he led offended nobody: Madame Benzoni, a great lady in Venice, told Moore that before the Guiccioli affair “*Il se conduisait si bien.*” I think we ought to discount Shelley's testimony on the subject. Shelley's native delicacy shrank from the animalism of such commonplace intrigues as he found Byron engaged in; he seems especially to have been shocked by the lowness of Byron's society: whereas to Byron's broader humanity it was the “pantaloon humour” of these low-class Venetians that was half their attraction.

I should like to leave this part of the subject, but that there is an admission to be made in honesty, without which any

small value that may attach to my estimate of Byron would disappear. In Moore's Diary he mentions having seen in John Murray's famous "parlour" a letter from Byron which disgusted him. He did not print it in his Life, and I hoped that there was some mistake. But it is printed now—it is letter 734—and it is not pleasant reading. It merely relates an "affair," but one of the kind a gentleman ought not to write about—whatever the *ethos* of his surroundings—even to an intimate friend. It is egotism of a bad sort. One is not an Old Bailey advocate for the defence, and one admits that here is an unworthy lapse even from the morality which may admit of palliation by circumstance. It is to be said, however, that Byron wrote it in a fever which followed a ducking in the Grand Canal. It is also to be said that there is no evidence that Byron meant John Murray to show all his letters to any one he pleased. I do not doubt that Murray supposed he had such a licence, but years after this time (to be fair to Murray) Byron is found rebuking him for showing a letter without permission.

Madame Guiccioli took Byron out of this Venetian licence, and he never returned to it, in Venice or elsewhere. It is superfluous to discuss this connection. Whatever be thought of the morality of it, and whatever his or her excuses, which were held good by better people than most of the hostile critics, it is certain

that they remained fond and faithful to one another. (According to Lord Malmesbury, her second husband, the Marquis de Boissy, introduced her as "ancienne maîtresse de Lord Byron.") But the occasion is offered to venture a little deeper into the psychology of Byron's emotions. The more I read in his letters and in the accounts of those who knew him best, the more I am convinced that the popular idea of Byron as a man whose life was bound up in his love affairs, whatever their nature, is the very reverse of the truth: that, on the contrary, his heart was very little concerned in them, and that his strongest emotions were his friendships with men whom he respected, whom he took for his intellectual peers. He seems to me to have longed to be understood, and liked, and affectionately regarded by his men friends with far more real feeling of the heart than is shown in any one of his affairs with women. He took women lightly, just a trifle in the Mohammedan way, and did not really care deeply about them in any other. No doubt he was chaffing when he said they ought not to eat with men: he said this sort of thing to annoy important ladies like Mrs Shelley and Mrs Hunt. And no doubt he exaggerated when he wrote in his diary—in 1821: it is not the least of Mr Prothero's good deeds to have given these diaries and journals fully, as they were written—that the present state of women is "a remnant of the barbarism of

the chivalric and feudal ages—artificial and unnatural. They ought to mind home—and be well fed and clothed—but not mixed in society. . . . Music—drawing—dancing—also a little gardening and ploughing now and then.” But underneath the humour there is a sort of conviction. He wrote jestingly—and I do not think it was all affectation—even of his affair with Mme. Guiccioli. But there can be no doubt of his affection towards the men he really liked, of his eagerness to acknowledge the least kindness from any one of them, of his unstinted return of appreciation.

Much of what is called Byron’s vanity I believe to have been this eagerness for the friendship of intellect and understanding. His pleasure when Walter Scott wrote to him and his almost effusive replies; his hearty acknowledgment of Isaac d’Israeli’s appreciation; his delight in Goethe’s—this is not vanity, but the best kind of human response, of mind leaping to mind. His patience under the criticism of those he liked is as notable as the vigour of his replies to that of his enemies. It is almost ludicrous to read of his allowing the first two cantos of “Don Juan” to be submitted to a committee of friends, who were to decide if they ought to be published. Of this surprising committee two members, Moore and Frere, were poets, and of course in their own view rivals, and there were also Kinnaird, a banker, Hobhouse, a sincere but very

candid friend, and Scrope Davies, a “buck.” The committee decided that the cantos should not be published, and Byron in the first instance positively acquiesced, with a shrug at the “cant of the day” and a humorous complaint, quoting Tony Lumpkin, that he should be “snubbed so while I am in spirits.” Not only about “Don Juan,” but about most of his other poems, Murray his publisher plied him with remonstrances and criticisms, and Byron met them all with careful argument and counter-appeal to be allowed to write his own poems. Even when Murray took upon himself to omit stanzas, dedications, and what not without leave, Byron, though exasperated, did no more than complain. He even writes to Moore: “Murray has shuffled, and almost insinuated that my last productions are *dull*. Dull, sir!—damme, dull! I believe he is right.” There is not much vanity or arrogance in that. His relations with Murray are interesting, if only because the bulk of the letters, and especially of the new letters, were written to that personage. They have their comic side, and both poet and publisher made extraordinary demands on human patience. Byron seems to have looked on Murray as a sort of Whitely, a “universal emporium.” I have noted down some of the things the unfortunate publisher was required to send out to Italy: Tooth-powder, Peruvian bark, magnesia, Macassar oil, a bulldog, a terrier, two Newfound-

land dogs, of course innumerable books, and "Burkitt's soda powders." The poet was difficult in the matter of proofs. "None of your damned proofs; . . . don't let me have any of your cursed printers' trash to pore over," he writes at one time, and at another is furious when printers' mistakes appear in his books. He sometimes patronises Murray with a sort of mock offensiveness, telling him that he is "a little spoilt by 'villainous company'—wits, persons of honour about town, authors, and fashionables—together with your 'I am just going to call at Carlton House: are you walking that way,' " and banters him on "the ferine nature of a publisher"; but it is clear that mutual regard of the two men was never seriously interrupted. It was only when Byron's good nature was persuaded by Shelley to help the luckless enterprise of the brothers Leigh and John Hunt that even the business relation ceased—tried as it had been on both sides, by Murray's fears and Byron's irritations.

Byron had to complain, and justly, as Moore admitted in his *Diary* too late, of neglect from old friends—"thinking constantly, as his letters prove him to have been, of distant friends, and receiving few or none equal proofs of thoughtfulness in return." He had to find, as others have found, how little active is the good nature we hopefully attribute to our acquaintance. But his own good nature was proof against that. With Moore he never quarrelled at all, nor

varied in his affectionate tone. There was a fresh—and an amusing—breeze with Hobhouse, but it was Hobhouse who took offence. When that ardent reformer was sent to Newgate for a brief period, Byron sent a funny ballad, in which it is hard to see more than friendly chaff, to Murray, from whom it leaked into the papers. Hobhouse was furious, not remembering his own lines on Byron, his parody of "Though the day of my Destiny's over"—"Dear Byron, this humbug give over," &c.—which are a good deal more severe. (It is a very funny and strictly verbal parody, of a sort we see too little of now: our parodist in chief, Mr Seaman, parodies the spirit, a more difficult task, but the other sort is worth having as well.) It was later, however, that they quarrelled more angrily, the cause, which had something to do with a bust, being obscure. Hobhouse wrote Byron an abusive letter, and Byron asked of Murray: "By the way, you do not happen to know whether Mrs Fry had commenced her reform of the prisoners at the time when Mr Hobhouse was in Newgate? there are some of his phrases and much of his style (in that same letter), which led me to suspect that either she had not, or that he had profited less than the others by her instructions." (I venture to quote, as it is part of the new material, but of course one could quote such delightful fun for ever from the letters.) But with Hobhouse, as with Kinnaird and

a few others of his oldest friends, affection survived the trials of distance and consequent mistakes. One would give much to have more of his letters to Lord Clare. Mdme. Guiccioli describes Byron's emotion when he and Lord Clare parted in Italy, and in the last year of his life we find him still writing to this old Harrow chum as "my dearest Clare." Friends, cronies, confidants, and sympathisers among men—that is what was really important to Byron's heart.

Of the men with whom he consorted after 1816 one thinks first of Shelley. It was an intellectual friendship, based on a mutual admiration which—in spite of the phrase's evil meaning—was genuine and proper. Their tastes were not alike, and Shelley's sensitiveness sometimes was hurt by Byron's manner. But Byron wrote to Murray after Shelley's death—and the sentence is alone, as they say, worth a new edition of the letters—"You were all brutally mistaken about Shelley, who was, without exception, the *best* and least selfish man I ever knew. I never knew one who was not a beast in comparison." It is a tribute to rank with that of Gibbon to Henry Fielding, and it may be a finer.

It is not necessary to discuss the Leigh Hunt trouble. Hunt seems to have been one of those men born to justify cynics: he resented an obligation, though he made no effort to requite it; and that Byron should house

and finance him and give, among other of his finest works, the "Vision of Judgment" to John Hunt's wretched paper, weighed nothing against fancied slights. The quarrel, such as it was, I suspect was a woman's affair. Byron disliked Hunt's *kraal*, as he rather rudely called it, and, especially, the "six little blackguards," Hunt's sons, and foolishly wrote this sentiment to Mrs Shelley. That good lady, I am strongly of opinion, would have shown at once such a letter to Mrs Hunt. The opinion is not harsh, for Mrs Shelley's generosity is revealed to us. Byron had refused Shelley's legacy to himself of £2000, had done all he could to get his widow an allowance from Sir Timothy Shelley, and had offered her money of his own, which she refused, preferring to accept Trelawney's. When Byron started for Greece (taking with him £10,000 to spend on the Greeks as a beginning) Mrs Shelley inveighed against his "unconquerable avarice" which "prevented his supplying me with money," and related how "a remnant of shame caused him to avoid me." Not, I think, the nicest sort of woman. As for Trelawney, he disliked Byron, and is not a trustworthy chronicler; moreover, his acquaintance with Byron was at a time when the poet's nerves, as many incidents show, were irritable. We know little of his Italian friendships, about which he would not be likely to write very much to his English correspondents. The Counts Gamba, the father and brother of Mdme. Guiccioli, were

his constant allies, and Pietro Gamba seems to have been the most intimate of his foreign men friends. They seem rather to have "let him in" during the revolutionary movement at Ravenna—storing condemnatory arms in his house when the plot was discovered—but your patriot is often careless.

In labouring to be clear, I become long: I must quit this more exclusively personal aspect of Byron in Italy with a very few more words. The circumstances of his life were not likely to check the egotism obvious in him from the first, and the new letters, of course, are full of it. But it remained for the most part an egotism of the head and not of the heart—a harmless egotism which made him analyse himself in his diaries, and write accounts of the same trivial incident that had happened to him to half-a-dozen friends, and linger over his feats at swimming and recall his "notches" at Lord's, but which never stood in the way of the sympathetic ear and the open hand. Without the egotism he could not have been the poet we admire, without the obverse side the Byron whose memory it is possible to love. Practical sense, judgment, observation, a grip of things—those qualities waver, as with all men, but grow steadily all the while. The humour becomes mellow, but remains as gay. A bitter gibe at his wife from time to time we have, yet also a curious desire she should be kept in mind of him, and a real solicitude for his daughter, Ada. As for his old loves, he

obliged my theory by hardly mentioning them: we find him trying to reconcile Lady Frances Webster and her husband at Leghorn with a friendly gravity.

This is not an occasion to write of the poetry, even if to do so would not be worse than superfluous. But questions of literary criticism fill a good space in the letters, especially in vol. v., and some of them are focussed by Mr Prothero in his appendices. Passages in the new letters, in vol. v., which depreciate Keats have caused a good deal of not unnatural annoyance to present-day critics. Now, if Byron's abuse of Keats—for I fear it amounts to that—had been a cold-blooded and accurate expression of opinion, it would reflect without doubt on Byron's taste and judgment. But the reverse is the case. In that day literary "schools" and parties were furiously fighting bodies. Keats, in the eye of the world, belonged to the school of Wordsworth and Coleridge—a school which offended Byron by its really excessive claims to be the only prophet of "nature," and by an equally excessive and unreasonable belittling of Pope. The controversy between the classical and the romantic is dead: we are content to see the merits of both and enjoy what is best in them, but in the first quarter of the nineteenth century this reasonable course was almost impossible. Byron, also, would have been more than human if he had not been influenced by a very personal consideration. His own genius, stimulated by

emotion though it was, grew, more strongly as years went on, intellectual, observant, epigrammatic, worldly, and it led him to forsake his first passionate manner and incline to the classical mode. He thought, and rightly, that his later work was far better than his earlier. But the later work was by no means so popular as the earlier. He wrote to Shelley in 1822: "Murray writes discouragingly. . . . You see what it is to throw pearls to swine. As long as I wrote the exaggerated nonsense"—was ever poet so candid before or since?—"which has corrupted the public taste, they applauded to the very echo; and now that I have really composed, within these three or four years, some things which should 'not willingly be let die,' the whole herd snort and grumble and return to wallow in their mire." Pope was Byron's idol: he spared no pains to defend him, writing prodigious long attacks on the Rev. Mr Bowles, and Keats was closely associated with his dispraise. It is, moreover, to the credit of Byron's judgment that he saw in Keats the strong man of the school he disliked—though of course, being a fighting critic, he did not say so—the man "to go for," and he went for him accordingly. As for the strength of his language, violence was the fashion of the time: the curious may see, in one of Mr Prothero's appendices, remarks of Southey upon Byron as violent as anything Byron wrote against Keats or even Southey himself, and far—far—more venomous. When

Keats died, Byron hastened to request Murray to "omit *all* that is said *about him* in any MSS. of mine, or publication," and added, "His 'Hyperion' is a fine monument, and will keep his name." This was more generous dealing than Byron's critics meted to himself: the amiable Southey was moved to be "sorry" for Byron's death, "because it comes in aid of a pernicious reputation which was stinking in the snuff." (It is worth turning to this appendix to admire an exercise in malevolent, canting self-righteousness more remarkable than any of Southey's poems.) But even in our own impartial times, critics sometimes say things in their haste which their judgment might correct. I read the other day in a serious "weekly" the expression of a wish that Mr Kipling "would give up writing altogether," and the critic had just read 'Kim.' If Byron was a little blind to the merits of Keats there was much excuse, and we are justified in thinking that he was not so blind as he seemed.

It was not a new Byron who sailed for Greece in 1823; it was not a quality hitherto dormant that suddenly took the lead of the rest. Dr Drury at Harrow had thought he should be an orator and a statesman, and he had never been a sedentary poet, but of his nature, though not in results, essentially a man of action. For all that he wrote and read he had to thank his vitality of constitution: he could never live without mixing with men and lending his weight to their affairs,

and had his strength not admitted of both it was action that would have come first. A happier start in public life at home and happier circumstances in his private life might easily have lost the poet in the statesman. The countenance of English society, you must remember, was not given him until he had written a famous poem, and to start political life in the House of Lords poor and friendless was no likelier an opportunity than now. And before he had run through the romantic and other pleasures which the brief worship of society threw in his path, before he had had fair time for such a temperament as his to set steadily for ambition, he was driven out of the country. This is perhaps a vain speculation, but at least action—adventure—the affairs of men, played as it was an invariably important part with him. First his travels, then tumultuous social action, so to call it, in England, then the dissipation and society of Venice, and then the revolutionary plots, into which he threw himself heart and soul at Ravenna. The spies of the Austrian Government, as their reports show, looked on Byron as a powerful conspirator—making all kinds of mistakes about him, as such gentry do, but obtaining plenty of corroboration for their fears. It is probable that the comparative calm of his last two years in Italy, only relieved by silly Hunt squabbles and the like, had thoroughly bored him: his joy at escaping for an adventure is on record.

His motive in going can

hardly have been merely enthusiasm for "liberty." The generous souls of that day had the privilege of believing that "liberty" would really bring happiness to little nationalities, and Byron shared sincerely in this belief—which was at times a little strangely in contrast with his ultra-aristocratic habit of mind and contempt for the mob. But he could have had no illusions about the Greeks. He had seen them as a young man, when he thought them "plausible rascals," with the vices of the Turks without their virtues. Or, if he had any, he must have been quickly undeceived. One of his first actions at Missolonghi was to release several Mohammedan women and children whom the revolted Greeks had enslaved, after butchering the men; and from first to last almost every Greek who approached him tried to swindle him, or at least to make a private haul from the money he was ready to supply to the cause. "Damned liars!" he wrote in a journal, and applauds St Paul for seeing no difference between a Greek and a Jew. What sort of ambition he may have had for himself cannot be known. There were great chances in the game, for the quarrels of the Greek leaders were already making a foreign ruler indispensable. A large governorship at least he might have looked for, if not for something grander. But I fancy it was just the adventure that moved him most.

The upshot makes pitiable reading. Intrigues, worries, revolts, impossible leaders, impos-

sible followers — illness, death. To the last he was indefatigable, keen, practical, and far-seeing. The might-have-beens crowd on one's imagination. If Byron had lived to the Psalmist's limit, he would have been alive in 1858. What would he have thought of Tennyson, of Dickens, of Thackeray? Of Disraeli, of Gladstone? These superficial questions give way to others less plausibly to be answered. But I cannot see that there was any radical twist in Byron's nature that was sure to bring an explosion, a madness, in the end. I cannot see why the strengthening of judgment, of the hold on practical life, of the curb on waywardness should not have continued. If he had returned from Greece he would have returned to England: that is certain. "Why did I not go to England before I came here?" he said on his deathbed. His old disgust of his countrymen had been waning, and was probably near its end in Cephalonia, where the good-fellowship towards

him of the English officers surprised and touched him. If he had returned to England the old "literary" enemies and their war-cries would have been loud, of course, but they could not have stopped his course. With the fresh glamour of his Greek exploits on him another splendid chance would have been his, and this time it would not have been stolen from him. How would he have used it? His vigour as a poet was still at its greatest when he died, but there are signs that he was weary of the literary hubbub, and he was not one to write for writing's sake without regard to his effect. It was a time of great doings in politics, but not of very strong men, and such a force as Byron's must have weighed heavily then, if he had chosen. Vain dreams!—but I think that the loss of his intellectual honesty to English life was hardly less than that of his fire and his wit to English letters.

G. S. STREET.

THE WESTCOTES.¹

BY A. T. QUILLER-COUCH.

CHAPTER VII.—LOVE AND AN OLD MAID.

I PRAY you be gentle with Dorothea. Find, if you can, something admirable in this plain spinster keeping, at thirty-seven, a room in her breast adorned and ready for first love. Find it pitiful, if you must, that the blind boy should so mistake his lodging. Only do not laugh, or your laughter may accuse you in the sequel.

She had a most simple heart. Wonder filled it as she rode home to Bayfield, and by the bridge she reined up Mercury as if to take her bearings in an unfamiliar country. At her feet rushed the Axe, swollen by spring freshets; a bullfinch, wet from his bath, bobbed on the sandstone parapet, shook himself, and piped a note or two; away up the stream among the alders birds were chasing and courting; from above the Bayfield elms, out of spaces of blue, the larks' song fell like a din of innumerable silver hammers. Either new sense had been given her, or the rains had washed the landscape and restored obliterated lines, colours, meanings. The very leaves by the roadside were fragrant as flowers.

For the moment it sufficed to know that she was loved, and that she loved. She was

no fool. At the back of all her wonder lay the certainty that in the world's eyes such love as hers was absurd; that it must end where it began; that Raoul could never be hers, nor she escape from a captivity as real as his. But, perhaps because she knew all this so certainly, she could put it aside. This thing had come to her: this happiness to which—alone, in darkness, depressed by every look into the mirror, by every casual proof that her brothers and intimates accepted its verdict as final—her soul had been loyal,—a forgotten servant of a neglectful lord. In the silence of her own room, in her garden, in the quiet stir of household duties, and again during the long evenings while she sat knitting by the fire and her brothers talked, she had pondered much upon love and puzzled herself with many questions. She had watched girls and their lovers, wives and their husbands. Can love (she has asked) draw near, and pass and go its way unrecognised? She had conned the signs. Now the hour had come, and she had needed none of her learning: eyes, hands, and voice, she had known the authentic god.

¹ Copyright in the United States of America by H. F. Coates & Co., Philadelphia.

And she knew that it was not absurd: she knew herself worthy of love's belated condescension—not Raoul's. For the moment she scarcely thought of Raoul. For the moment Raoul's image grew faint and indefinite in the glory of being loved. Her instinct, too, thrust it into the background; for as Raoul grew definite so must his youth, his circumstances, the world's laughter, the barriers never to be overcome. But merely to be loved, and to rest in that knowledge awhile—here were no barriers. The thing had happened. It *was*. Nothing could forbid or efface it.

Yet when she reached home, after forcing the astonished Mercury to canter up the entire length of Bayfield hill, she must walk straight to her room and study her face in the glass.

"It has happened to you—to you! Why has it not transfigured you? But then people would guess. Your teeth stand out—well, not so very prominently—but they stand out, and that is why foreigners laugh at Englishwomen. Yes, it has happened to you; but why? how?"

It so happened that she must meet him the next day. Narcissus had engaged him to make drawings of the Bayfield pavement, a new series to supersede hers in an enlarged edition of the treatise. Every one of the *tessellæ* was to be drawn to scale, and she must meet him to-morrow in the library with her brother and receive instructions, for she

had promised to help in taking measurements.

When the time came, and she entered the library, she did not indeed dare to lift her eyes. But Narcissus, already immersed in calculations, scarcely looked up from his paper. "Ah! there you are: have you brought the India ink?" he asked; and after a minute she marvelled at her own self-possession. Even when he left them to work out the measurements together (and it flashed upon her that henceforth they would often be left together—her immunity would be taken for granted), she kept her head bowed over the papers, and managed to control her voice to put one or two ordinary questions—until the pencil dropped from her fingers and she felt her hand imprisoned.

"Dorothea!"

"Oh please, no!" she entreated hoarsely. "M. Raoul——"

"Charles." She attempted to draw her hand away, but, failing, lifted her eyes for mercy. They were sick and troubled. "Charles," he insisted.

"Charles, then." She relented, and he kissed her gaily. It was as if she drank in the kiss and, the next moment, recoiled from it. He released her hand and waited, watching her. She stood upright by the table, her shoulder turned to him, her eyes gazing through the long window upon the green stretch of lawn. She was trembling slightly.

"It—it hurts like a wound," she murmured, and her hand went up to her breast. "But

you must listen, please. You know—better than I—that this is the end. Oh yes”—as he would have interrupted—“it is beautiful—for me. But I am old and you are a boy, and it is all quite silly. Please, listen: even apart from this it would be quite silly, and could end nowhere.”

He caught at her hand again, and she let it lie in his.

“Nowhere,” she repeated, and, lifting her head, nodded twice. Her eyes were brimming.

“But if you love me——” he began.

She waited a moment, but he did not finish. “Ah, there it is, you see; you cannot finish. I was afraid to meet you to-day; but now I am glad, because we can talk about it once and for all. Charles”—she hesitated over the name—“dear, I have been thinking. Since we see this so clearly, it can be no treachery to my brothers to let our love stand where it does. At my age”—and Dorothea laughed nervously—“one is more easily contented than at yours.”

“I cannot bear your talking in this way.”

“Oh yes, you can,” she assured him with a practical little nod. “I don’t like it myself, but it has to be done. Now, in the first place, when we meet like this there must be no kissing.” She blushed while her voice wavered again over the word; then, as again his hand closed upon hers, she laughed. “Well—yes—you may kiss my hand. But I must not have it on my conscience that I am

hiding from Endymion and Narcissus what they have a right to know. Of course they would be angry if they knew that I—that I loved you at all; but they would have no right, for they could not have forbidden or prevented it. Now, if our prospects were what folks would call happier, why, then, in earnest of them, you might kiss me, but then you would be bound to go to my brothers and tell them. But since it can all come to nothing——” A ghost of a smile finished the sentence.

“This war cannot last for ever.”

“It seems to have lasted ever since I can remember. But what difference could its ending make? Ah, yes—then I should lose you!” she cried in dismay, but added with as sudden remorse, “Forgive my selfishness!”

“You are adorable,” said he, and they laughed and picked up their pencils.

Dorothea’s casuistry might prove her ignorant of love and its perils as a child is of fire; but having, as she deemed, discovered the limits of her duty, and set up her terms with Raoul upon them, she soon developed a wonderful cunning in the art of being loved. Her plainness and the difference in their ages she took for granted and subtly persuaded Raoul to take for granted: she had no affectations, no *minauderies*: by instinct she avoided setting up any illusion which he could not share: unconsciously and naturally she rested her strength on

the maternal, protective side of love. Raoul came to her with his woes, his difficulties, his quarrels against fate; and she talked them over with him and advised him almost as might a wise elder sister. She had read the 'Confessions,' and, in spite of the missing pages, with less of fascination than disgust, yet had absorbed more than she knew. In Raoul she recognised certain points of likeness to his great countryman—points which had puzzled her in the book. Now the book helped her to treat them, though she was unaware of its help. Still less aware was she of any likeness between her and Madame de Warens, of whom (again in spite of the missing pages) she had a poor opinion.

The business of the drawings brought Raoul to Bayfield almost daily; and, as she had foreseen, they were much alone. After all—since it could end in nothing—the situation had its advantages: no one in the household gave it a thought, apparently. Dorothea was not altogether sure about Polly; once or twice she had caught Polly eyeing her with an odd expression, — once especially, when she had looked up as the girl was plaiting her hair, and their eyes met in the glass. And once again Dorothea had sent her to the library with a note of instructions left that morning by Narcissus, and following a few minutes later had found her standing and talking with M. Raoul in an attitude which, without being familiar, was not quite respectful.

"What was she saying?" her

mistress asked, a moment or two later.

"Oh, nothing," he answered negligently. "I suppose that class of person cannot be troubled to show respect to prisoners."

That evening Dorothea rated the girl soundly for her pertness. "And I shall speak to Zeally," she threatened, "if anything of the kind happens again. If Mr Endymion is to let you two have a house when you marry; and take in the Frenchmen as lodgers, he will want to know that you treat them properly." Polly wept promptly and was forgiven.

April, May, June, went by, and still Dorothea lived in her dream, troubled only by dread of the day which must bring her lover's task to an end, and, with it, his almost daily visits. Bit by bit she learned his story. He told her of Arles, his birth-place, with its Roman masonry and amphitheatre; of a turreted, terraced château and a family of aristocrats lordling it among the vineyards; conspiring a little later with other noble families, entertaining them at secret meeting of the *Chiffonne*, where oaths were taken; later again, defending itself behind barricades of paving-stones; last of all, marched or carried in batches to the guillotine or the fusillade. He told of Avignon and its papal castle overhanging the Rhone, the city where he had spent his schooldays, and at the age of nine had seen Patriot L'Escuyer stabbed to death in the Cordeliers' Church with women's scissiors; had seen Jourdan the

avenger, otherwise *Coupe-tête*, march flaming by at the head of his brave *brigands d'Avignon*. He told of the sequel, the hundred and thirty men, women, and babes slaughtered in the dungeon of the *Glacière*; of Choisi's dragoons and grenadiers at the gates, and how, with roses scattered before them, they marched through the streets to the castle, entered the gateway and paused, brought to a stand by the stench of putrefying flesh. He and his schoolmates had taken a holiday—their master being in hiding—to see the bodies lifted out. Also he had seen the search-party ride out through the gates and return again bringing Jourdan, with feet strapped beneath his horse's belly. He told of his journey to Paris—his purpose to learn to paint (at such a time!); of the great David, fat and wheezy, back at his easel, panting from civil bloodshed; of the call to arms, his enlistment, his first campaign of 1805; of the foggy morning of Austerlitz, his wound, and the long hours he lay in the rear of a battery on the height of Pratzen, writhing, watching the artillerymen at work; . . . and so on, with stories of marching and fighting, nights slept out by him at full length on the sodden turf beside his arms.

She had no history to tell him in exchange: she asked only to listen and to comfort. Yet so cleverly he addressed his story that the longest monologue became, by aid of a look

or pressure of the hand, a conversation in which she, his guardian angel, bore her part. Did he talk of Avignon, for instance? It was the land of Laura and Petrarch, and she, seated with half-closed eyes beneath the Bayfield elms, saw the pair beside the waters of Vaucluse, saw the roses and orange-trees and arid plains of Provence, and wondered at the trouble in their spiritual love. *She* was not troubled: love as "a dureless content and a trustless joy" lay outside of her knowledge, and she had no desire to prove it. In this only she forgot the difference between Raoul's age and hers.

The day came when his work was ended. They spent a great part of that afternoon in the garden, now in the height of its midsummer glory. Raoul was very silent.

"But this must not end. It cannot end so!" he groaned once or twice. He never forgot for long his old spite against Time.

"It will never end for me," she murmured.

"Of what are you made, then, that you look forward to living on shadows?—one would say almost cheerfully! I believe you could be happy if you never saw me again!"

"Even if that had to be," she answered gravely, "while I knew you loved me I should never be quite unhappy. But you must find a way, while you can, to come sometimes: yes, you must come."

CHAPTER VIII.—CORPORAL ZEALLY INTERVENES.

Dorothea sat in the great hall of Bayfield between the lamplight and the moonlight, listening to the drip of the fountain beneath its tiny cupola. A midsummer moon-ray fell through the uncurtained lantern beneath the dome, and spread in a small pool of silver at her feet. Beneath one of the two shaded lamps Endymion lounged in his armchair and read the 'Sherborne Mercury.' Narcissus had carried off the other to a table across the hall by the long bookcase, and above the pot-plants banked about the fountain she saw it shining on his shapely grey head as he bent over a copy of the Antonine Itinerary and patiently worked out a new theory of its distances. Her own face rested in deep shadow, and she felt grateful for it as she leaned back thinking her own thoughts. It was a whole week now since Charles had visited Bayfield; but she had encountered him that morning in Axcester High Street as she passed up it on horseback with her brothers. Narcissus had reined up to put some question or other about the drawings; but Endymion (who did not share his brother's liking for M. Raoul) had ridden on, and she had ridden on too, though reluctantly. She recalled his salute, his glance at her, and down-dropped eyes: she wondered what point Narcissus and he had discussed, and blamed herself for not having found courage to ask. . . .

The stable clock struck ten. She arose and kissed her brothers good night. By Narcissus she paused.

"Be careful of your eyes, dear. And if you are going to be busy with that great book these next few evenings, I will have the table brought across to the other side, where you will be cosier."

Narcissus came out of his calculations and looked up at her gently. "Please do not disarrange the furniture for me: a change always fidgets me, even before I take in precisely what has happened." He smiled. "In that I resemble my old friend Vespasian, who would have no alterations made when he visited his old home—*manente villa qualis fuerat olim, ne quid scilicet oculorum consuetudini deperiret*. A pleasant trait, I have always thought."

He lit her candle and kissed her, and Dorothea went up the broad staircase to her own room. Half-way along the corridor she stayed a moment to look down upon the hall. Endymion had dropped his newspaper and was yawning,—a sure sign that Narcissus, already reabsorbed in the Itinerary, would in a few moments be hurried from it to bed.

She reached the door of her room and opened it, then checked an exclamation of annoyance. For some mysterious reason Polly had forgotten to light her candle.

This was her rule, never broken before.

She stepped to the bell-pull. Her hand was on it when she heard the girl's voice muttering in the next room—the boudoir. At least it sounded like Polly's voice, though its tone was strangely subdued and level. "Talking to herself," Dorothea decided, and smiled in spite of her annoyance, as every one smiles who catches another in this trick. She dropped the bell-pull and opened the boudoir door.

Polly was not talking to herself. She was leaning far out of the open window, and at the sound of the door started back into the room with a gasp and a short cry.

"To whom were you talking?"

Dorothea had set the candle down in the bedroom. Outside the window the park lay spread to the soft moonshine, but the moon did not look directly into the boudoir. In the half-light mistress and maid sought each other's eyes.

"To whom were you talking?" Dorothea demanded sternly.

Polly was silent for a second or two, then her chin went up defiantly. "To Mr Raoul," she muttered.

"To M. Raoul!—to M. Raoul? I don't understand. Is M. Raoul—oh, for goodness' sake speak, girl! What is *that*? I see a piece of paper in your hand."

Polly twisted it in her fingers, and made a movement to hide it in her pocket. But with the movement she seemed to reflect.

"He gave it to me. I don't understand anything about it. I was shutting the window when he whistled to me. He gave me this: I—I think he meant it for you." Polly's tone suddenly became saucy, but her voice shook.

Dorothea was shaking too as her fingers closed on the note. She vainly sought to read the girl's eyes. Her own cheeks were burning, she felt,—the blood rushing into them and singing in her ears. Yet in her abasement she kept her dignity, and motioning Polly to follow, stepped into the bedroom, unfolded the letter slowly, and read it by the candle there:—

"MY ANGEL,—I have hungered now for a week. Be at your window this evening, and let me at least be fed with a word. See what I risk for you.—Yours devotedly and for ever."

There was no signature, but well enough Dorothea knew the handwriting. A wave of anger swelled in her heart—the first she had ever felt towards him. He had behaved selfishly. "See what I risk for you!"—but to what risk was he exposing *her*? He was breaking their covenant too—demanding that which he must know her conscience abhorred. She had not believed he could understand her so poorly, hold her so cheap. Cheap, indeed, since he had risked her name in Polly's hands!

She turned the paper over, noting its creases. Suddenly—

"You have opened and read this!" she said.

Polly admitted it with down-cast eyes. The girl, after the first surprise, had demeaned herself admirably, and now stood in the attitude proper to a confidential servant, solicitous, respectful, prepared to blink the peccadillo, even to sympathise discreetly at a hint given.

"I'm sorry, miss, that I opened it: I ought to have told you, but you took me by surprise. You know, miss, that you gave me leave to run down to my aunt's this evening; and on my way back—just as I was letting myself in by the nursery gate—Mr Raoul comes running up the hill after me and slips this into my hand. To tell you the truth, it rather frightened me—being run after like that. And he said something and ran back, for nine was just striking, and in a moment the Ting-tang would be ringing and he must be back to answer his name. So in my fluster I didn't catch what he meant. When I got home and opened it, I saw my mistake. But you were downstairs at dinner—I couldn't get to speak with you alone—I waited to tell you; and just now when I was drawing the blinds, I heard a whistle——"

"M. Raoul had no right to send me such a message, Polly. I cannot think what he means by it. Nothing that I have ever said to him——"

"No, miss," assented Polly readily. After a pause she added, "I suppose you'd like me to go now? You won't be wanting your hair done to-night?"

"Certainly I wish you to stay. Is he—is M. Raoul outside?"

"I think so, miss. Oh yes—for certain he is."

"Then I must insist on your staying with me while I dismiss him."

"Very good, miss. Would you wish me to stay here or to come with you?"

Dorothea felt herself blushing, and her temper rose again. "For the moment stay here. I will leave the door open and call you when you are wanted." She passed into the boudoir and bent to the open window. At this corner the foundations of the house stood some feet lower than the slope out of which they had been levelled; and she looked down upon a glæis of smooth turf, capped by a glimmering parapet of bath-stone. Beyond stretched the moonlit park.

"M. Raoul!" she called, but scarcely above a whisper.

A figure crept out from the dark angle below and climbed to the parapet.

"Dorothea! Forgive me! Another night and no word with you—I could not bear it."

"You are mad. You are breaking your parole and risking shame for me. Nay, you have shamed me already. Polly is here."

"Polly is a good girl: she understands. A word, then, if you must drive me away!"

"Your parole!"

"I can pass the sentries. No fear of the patrol hereabouts. Your hand—let down your hand to me. I can reach it from the parapet here—with my fingers

only—not with my lips: though even that you never forbade!”

Weakly, she lowered her arm over the sill. He reached to touch it; and she leaned her face towards his—hers in shadow, his pale in the moonlight.

Before their fingers met, a yellow flame leapt from the angle to the left; a loud report banged in her ears and echoed across the park; and Raoul, after swaying a second, pitched forward with a sharp cry and rolled to the foot of the glacis.

Dorothea forced herself back in the room, and there stood upright and shook, with Polly holding her two hands.

“They—they have shot him!”

The two women listened for a moment. All was still now. Polly stepped to the window and closed it softly.

“But why? Why?” Dorothea asked it in a hoarse whisper.

“They will find quite enough without that,” said the practical girl; but her voice quavered.

“Yet if they have seen——? Ah, how selfish to think of that now! Hush—that was a groan. He is alive still.” She moved towards the window, but Polly dragged her back by main force.

“Listen, miss!”

Below they heard the sudden unbarring of doors, and Endymion’s voice calling for Mudge the butler. A bell pealed in the servants’ hall, stopped, and began ringing again in short and violent jerks.

“Let me go,” commanded

Dorothea. “They will never find him under the slope there. He may be bleeding to death—I must tell——”

But Polly clung to her. “They’ll find him safe enough, Miss Dorothea. There’s Sam now—hark—at the backdoor bell; he’ll tell them——”

“Sam?”

“Sam Zeally, miss.”

“But I don’t understand,”

Dorothea stammered; with a sharp suspicion of treachery she pushed the girl from her. “Was Zeally mounting guard to-night? If I thought—— Don’t tell me it was a *trap*! Oh, you wicked girl!”

“No, it wasn’t,” answered Polly sulkily. “I don’t know nothing of Sam’s movements. But he might be hanging about the house; and if he saw a man talking to me—he’s as jealous as fire——”

She broke off at the sound of voices below the window. The ray of a lantern, as the search-party jolted it, flashed and danced on wall and ceiling of the dim boudoir. A sharp exclamation announced that Raoul was discovered; a confused muttering followed; and then Dorothea heard Endymion’s voice calling up to Mudge from the bottom of the trench, “Run to Miss Westcote’s room and tell her we shall require lint and bandages. There is no cause for alarm, assure her: say there has been an accident—a Frenchman overtaken out of bounds and wounded—I think not seriously. If she be gone to bed, get the medicine-chest and the key, and bring them to the kitchen.”

Dorothea had charge of the Bayfield medicine-chest, and kept it in a cupboard of the boudoir. She groped for it, pulled open drawer after drawer, rifled them for linen, and by the time Mudge tapped on the door, stood ready with the chest under one arm and a heap of bandages in the other.

"In the kitchen, Mr Endymion said. I am coming at once: take the chest, run, and have as many lamps and candles lit as possible."

Mudge ran; Dorothea followed, with Polly behind her trembling like a leaf.

The two women reached the kitchen as the party entered with Raoul and supported him to a chair beside the dying fire. His face was colourless, and he lay back and closed his eyes weakly as Endymion stooped to examine the wounded leg, with Narcissus in close attendance and the others standing respectfully apart—Mudge, the two footmen (in their shirt-sleeves), an under-gardener named Best, one of the housemaids, and Corporal Zeally by the door in regimentals, with his japanned shako askew and his Brown Bess still in his hand. Behind his shoulder three or four of the women-servants hung about the doorway and peered in, between curiosity and terror.

It was a part of Endymion's fastidiousness that the sight of blood—that is, of human blood—turned his stomach. In her distress Dorothea could not help admiring how he conquered this aversion; how he knelt in his spick-and-span evening dress and, after turning back his

ruffles, unlaced the prisoner's soaked shoe and rolled down the stocking.

He looked up gratefully as she entered. In such emergencies Narcissus was worse than useless; but Dorothea had the nursing instinct, and her brothers recognised it. The sight of a wound or a hurt steadied her wits, and she became practical and helpful at once.

"A flesh-wound only, I think; just above the ankle—the tendon cut, but the bone apparently not broken."

"It may be splintered, though," said Dorothea. "Has any one thought of sending for Doctor Ibbetson? He must be fetched at once. A towel, please—three or four—from the dresser there." A footman brought the towels. She knelt, folded two on her lap, and resting Raoul's foot there, drew the stocking gently from the wound. "A basin and warm water, not too hot. Polly, you will find a small sponge in the second drawer. . . ." She nodded towards the medicine-chest. "One of you make up a better fire and set on a fresh kettle. . . ."

She gave her orders in a low firm voice, and continued to direct every one thus while she sponged the wound and drew off the stocking. Neither towards them nor towards Raoul did she lift her eyes. The bare foot of her beloved rested in her lap. She heard him groan twice, but with no pain inflicted by her fingers: if their slightest pressure had hurt him she would have known.

She went on bathing the wound—she who could have bathed it with her tears. Then, as time passed and still the doctor did not come, she began to bandage it. She called on Polly for the bandages; then, still without looking up, she divined that Polly was useless—was engaged in trying to catch Zeally's eye and warn him or get a word with him.

"He's pale as a ghost yet," said Endymion. "Another dose of brandy might set him up. I gave him some from my flask before bringing him in."

"He is not going to faint," she answered.

"Well, I won't bother him with questions until he comes round a bit. You, Zeally, had better step into my room, though, and give me your version of the affair."

But as the corporal saluted and took a step forward, the prisoner opened his eyes. "Before you examine Zeally, sir, let me save you what trouble I can." He spoke faintly, but with deliberation. "I wish to deny nothing. I was escaping, and he tracked me. He came on me as I cut across the park, and challenged. I did not answer, but ran round a corner of the house and jumped the parapet, thinking to double along the trench there and put him off the scent—at least to dodge the bullet, if he fired. But as I jumped for it, he winged me. A very pretty shot, too. With your leave, sir, I'd like to shake hands with him on it. Shake hands, corporal!" Raoul stretched out a hand sideways. "You're a

smart fellow, and no malice between soldiers."

Dorothea heard Polly's gasp: it seemed to her that all the room must hear it. Her own hand trembled on the bandage. She had forgotten her danger—the all but inevitable scandal—until Raoul brought it back to her, and in the same breath saved her by his heroic lie. She could not suffer it, though. Her lips parted to refute it, and for the first time she gazed up at him, her eyes brimming with sudden love, gratitude, pride, even while they entreated against the sacrifice. He was smiling down with an air of faint amusement; yet beneath the lashes she read a command which mastered her will, imposed silence. He had taken on a new manliness, and for the first time in the story of their loves she felt herself dominated by something stronger than passion. He had swept her off her feet, before now, by boyish ardour: her humility, the marvel of being loved, had aided him; but hitherto in her heart she had always felt her own character to be the stronger. Now he challenged her on woman's own ground—that of self-abnegation: he commanded her to his own hurt, he towered above her. She had never dreamed of a love like this. Beaten, despairing for him, yet proud as she had never been in her life, she held her breath.

Corporal Zeally was merely bewildered. His was a slow mind, and had brought about the night's catastrophe after weeks of labour. Unconvinced by Polly's explanation of her

meeting with M. Raoul at the nursery gate, he had nursed a dull jealousy and set himself to watch, and had dogged his man down at length with the slow cunning of a yokel bred of a line of poachers. Raoul's tribute to his smartness perplexed him, and almost he scented a trap.

"Beg your pardon, Squire," he began heavily, forgetting military forms of address, "but the gentleman don't put it right."

"Oh, hang your British modesty!" put in Raoul with a wry laugh. "If it pleases you to represent that the whole thing was accidental, and you don't deserve to be promoted sergeant for to-night's work, at least you might respect my vanity!"

Polly saw her opportunity. She crossed boldly and made as if to lay over the corporal's mouth the hand that would fain have boxed his ears. "Reckon this is my affair," she announced with an effrontery at which one of the footmen gaffawed openly. "Be modest, as you please, my lad, when I've married 'ee; but I won't put up with modesty from any one under a sergeant, and that I warn 'ee."

The corporal eyed his sweetheart without forgiveness. His mouth was open; but upon the word "sergeant" he shut it again and began to digest the idea slowly.

"You know, of course, sir," — Endymion Westcote addressed the prisoner coldly, — "to what such a confession commits you? I do not see what other construction the

facts admit; but it is so serious, in itself and in its consequences, that I warn you——"

"I have broken my parole, sir," said Raoul simply. "Of the temptations you cannot judge. Of the shame I am as profoundly sensible as you can be. The consequences I am ready to suffer." He sank back as Doctor Ibbetson entered.

An hour later Dorothea said good night to her brother in the great hall. He had lit his candle, and was mixing himself a glass of brandy-and-water.

"The sight of blood——" he excused himself. "I am sorry for the fellow, though I never liked him. I suppose, now, there was nothing between him and that girl Polly? For a moment—from Zeally's manner——" He gulped down the drink. "His confession was honest enough, anyhow. Poor fool! he's safe in hospital for a week; and his friends, if he has any, and they know what it means, will pray for that week to be prolonged."

"What does it mean?" Dorothea managed to ask.

"It means Dartmoor."

Dorothea's candlestick shook in her hand, and the extinguisher fell on the floor. Her brother picked it up and restored it.

"Naturally," he murmured with brotherly affection, "your nerves! It has been a trying night, but you bore yourself admirably, Dorothea. Ibbetson assures me he could not have tied the bandage better himself. I felt proud of my sister." He kissed her gallantly and pulled out his watch. "Past twelve

o'clock!—time they were round with the barouche. The sooner we get Master Raoul down to the infirmary and pack him in bed the better."

As Dorothea went up the stairs she heard the sound of wheels on the gravel.

She could not accept his sacrifice. No; a way must be found to save him, and in her prayers that night she began to seek it. But while she prayed, her heart was bowed over a great joy. She had a hero for a lover.

CHAPTER IX.—DOROTHEA CONFESSES.

She saw no more of him, and heard very little, before the court-martial met. No one acquainted with the proprieties of that age—so full-blooded in its vices—will need to be told that she never dreamed of asking her brother's permission to visit the prisoners' infirmary. He reported—once a-day, perhaps, and casually—that the patient was doing well. Dorothea ventured once to sound General Rochambeau; but the old aristocrat answered stiffly that he took no interest in *déclassés*, and plainly hinted that in his judgment M. Raoul had sinned past pardon—which but added to her remorse. From time to time she obtained some hearsay news through Polly; but Polly's chief interest now lay in her approaching marriage.

For the Commissary, while accepting Raoul's version of his capture, had an intuitive gift which saved him from wholly believing in it. His conduct of the affair, if we consider the extent of his knowledge, was nothing less than masterly. Corporal Zeally found himself a sergeant within forty-eight hours, and within an hour of the announcement he and

Polly were given an audience in the Bayfield library, with the result that Parson Middleton cried their banns in Axcester Church on the following Sunday, and the bride-elect received a month's wages and three weeks' notice of dismissal, with a hint that the reason for her short retention—to instruct her successor in Miss Dorothea's ways—was ostensible rather than real. With Raoul's fate she declined to meddle. "Here," he said in effect, "is my report, including the prisoner's confession. I do my simple duty in presenting it. But the young man was captured in my grounds; he was known to be a *protégé* of my brother's; finding him wounded and faint with loss of blood we naturally did our best for him, and this again renders me perhaps too sympathetic. The law is the law, however, and must take its course." No attitude could have been more proper or shown better feeling.

So Raoul, who made a rapid recovery,—barring the limp, which he carried to the end of his days,—was tried, condemned, and sentenced in the space of two hours. He stuck to his story, and the court had no al-

ternative. Dartmoor or Stapleton inevitably awaited the retaken violator of parole. The night after his sentence Raoul was marched past the Bayfield gates under escort for Dartmoor. And Dorothea had not intervened.

This of course proved that she was of no heroical fibre. She knew it. Night after night she had lain awake vainly contriving plans for his deliverance, and either she lacked inventiveness or was too honest, for no method could she discover which avoided confession of the simple truth. As the days passed without catastrophe, and without news save that her lover was bettering in hospital, she staved off the truth, trusting that the next night would bring inspiration: almost she hoped—being quite unwise in such matters—that his sufferings would be accepted as cancelling his offence. So she played the coward. The blow fell, quite unexpectedly, on the evening when Endymion announced in casual tones that the court-martial was fixed for the day after to-morrow.

That night, indeed, brought something like an inspiration, and on the morrow she rode into Axcester and called upon Polly—now a bride of six days' standing and domiciled in one of the Westcote cottages in Church Street, a little beyond the bridge. For a call of state this was somewhat premature, but it might pass.

Polly appeared to think it premature. Her furniture was topsy-turvy and her hair in curl-papers: she obviously did

not expect visitors, and resented this curtailment of the honeymoon. She showed it even when Dorothea, after apologies, came straight to the point.

"Polly, I am very unhappy."

"Indeed, miss?"

"You know that I must be, since M. Raoul is going to that horrible war-prison rather than let the truth be known."

"But since you didn't encourage him, miss——"

"Of course I didn't encourage him to come," said Dorothea quickly.

"Why, then, it was his own fault; and he broke his word by breaking bounds."

"Yes, strictly his parole was broken; but the meaning of parole is that a prisoner promises to make no attempt to escape. M. Raoul never dreamed of escaping, yet that is the ground of his punishment."

"Well," said Polly, "if he chooses to say he was escaping I don't see how we—I mean, how you—can help."

"Why, by telling the truth; and that's what we ought to do—though it was wrong of him to expose us to it——"

"To be sure it was," Polly assented.

"But," urged Dorothea, "couldn't we tell the truth of what happened without any one's wanting to know more? He gave you a note, which you took without guessing what it contained. He wished to have speech with me. Before you could give me the note and I could refuse to see him—as I should certainly have done—he had arrived. His folly deserves punishment, but no such punish-

ment as being sent to Dartmoor."

Polly eyed her ex-mistress shrewdly. "Have you burnt the note?" she asked.

Dorothea, blushing to the roots of her hair, stammered, "No; I kept it—it was evidence for him, you see. I wish now——"

She broke off as Polly nodded her head. "I guessed you'd have kept it. And now you'll never make up your mind to burn it. You're too honest."

"But surely the note itself would not be called for?"

"I don't know. Folks ask curious questions in courts of law, I've always heard. Beggin' your pardon, miss, but your face tells too many tales, and any one but a fool would ask for that note before he'd been dealing with you three minutes. If he didn't, he'd ask you what was in it. And then you'd be forced to tell lies—which you couldn't, to save your soul."

Dorothea knew this to be true. She reflected a moment. "I should decline to show it or to answer."

Mrs Zeally thought it about time to assert herself.

"Very good. And now, how about *me*? They'd ask me questions too; and I'd have you consider, Miss Dorothea, that though not shaken down to it yet—not, as you might say, in a state to expect callers or make them properly welcome—I'm a respectable married woman. I don't mind confessing to you, Zeally isn't a comfortable man. He's pleased enough to be sergeant, though he don't quite know how it

came about; and he's that sullen with brooding over it that for sixpence he'd give me the strap to ease his feelings. I ain't complaining. Mr Endymion chose to take me on the hop and hurry up the banns, and I'm going to accommodate myself to the man. He's three parts of a fool, and you needn't fear but I'll manage him. But I ain't for taking no risks, and that I tell you fair."

Dorothea was stunned. "You don't mean to say that Zeally suspects *you*?"

"Why, of course he does!" said Polly. Prudence urged her to repeat that Zeally was three parts of a fool; but being nettled, she spoke the words uppermost—"Who d'ee think he'd suspect?"

Dorothea, however, was too desperately dejected to feel the prick of this shaft. "You will not help me, then?" was all her reply to it.

"Why, no, miss, if you put it in that point-blank way. A married woman's got to think of her reputation first of all."

Polly's attitude might be selfish, unfeeling; but it rested on common-sense, as Dorothea admitted to herself on her homeward way. To be sure the girl disappointed her; but the fundamental incapacity for gratitude in girls of Polly's class will probably surprise and pain their mistresses until the end of the world. After all, Polly was right. An attempt to clear Raoul by telling the superficial truth must involve terrible risks, and might at any turn enforce a choice between full confession and falsehood.

Dorothea could not bring herself to lie, even heroically; and there would be no heroism in lying to save herself. On the other hand, the thought of a forced confession—it might be, before a tribunal—was too hideous. No; the suggestion had been a mad one, and Polly had rightly thrown cold water on it. Also it had demanded too much of Polly, who could not be expected to jeopardise her matrimonial prospects to right a wrong for which she was not in truth responsible.

Dorothea loved a hero, but knew that she was no heroine. She called herself a pitiful coward — unjustly, because, nurtured as she had been on the proprieties, surrounded all her days by men and women of a class most sensitive to public opinion, who feared the breath of scandal worse than a plague, confession for her must mean a shame unspeakable. What? Admit that she, Dorothea Westcote, had loved a French prisoner almost young enough to be her son? that she had given him audience at night? that he had been shot and captured beneath her window?

Unjustly, too, she accused herself, because it is the decision, not the terror felt, which distinguishes the brave from the cowardly. If you doubt the event with Dorothea, the fault must be mine. She was timid; but she came of a race which in the end will endure anything rather than the conscious anguish of doing wrong.

Nor, had her conscience needed them, did it lack re-

mindings. Narcissus had been persuaded to send the drawings to London to be treated by lithography, a process of which he knew nothing, but to which M. Raoul during his studies in Paris had given much attention, and apparently not without making some discoveries—unimportant perhaps, and such as might easily reward an experimenter in an art not well past its infancy. At any rate, he had drawn up elaborate instructions for the London firm of printers; and when the proofs arrived with about a third of these instructions neglected and another third misunderstood, Narcissus was at his wits' end—aghast at the pooriness of the impressions, yet not knowing in the least how to correct them. He gave Dorothea no peace with them. Evening after evening she was invited to pore upon the drawings over which she and her lover had bent together; to criticise here and offer a suggestion there; while every line revived a memory, inflicted a pang. What suggestion could she find save the one which must not be spoken?—to send, fetch the artist back from Dartmoor, and remedy all this, with so much beside!

"But," urged Narcissus, "you and he spent hours together. I quite understood that he had explained the process to you, and on the strength of this I gave it too little attention. Of course, if one could have foreseen——" He broke off and added with some testiness, "I'd give fifty pounds to have the fellow back, if only for ten minutes' talk."

"But why couldn't we?" Dorothea asked suddenly, breathlessly. They were alone by the table under the bookcase. On the far side of the hall, before the fire, Endymion dozed after a long day with the partridges. Narcissus' words awoke a wild hope.

"But why couldn't we?" she repeated, her voice scarcely louder than a whisper.

"Well, that's an idea." He chuckled. "Confound the fellow, he imposed on all of us! If we had only guessed what he intended, we might have signed a petition telling him how necessary he had made himself, and imploring him, for our sakes, to behave like a gentleman."

"But supposing—supposing he was innocent—that he had never meant——" She put out a hand to lay it on her brother's. "Hush!" she could have cried; but it was too late.

"Endymion!" Narcissus called across the room jocosely.

"Eh? What is it?" Endymion came out of his doze.

"We're in a mess with these drawings—a complete mess; and we want Master Raoul fetched out of Dartmoor to set us right. Come now—as Commissary—what'll you take to work it for us? Fifty pounds has already been offered."

Dorothea turned from the table with a sigh for her lost chance.

"He'd like it," answered Endymion grimly. "But, my dear fellow,"—he slewed himself in his chair for a look round the hall,— "pray moderate your

tones. I particularly deprecate levity on such matters within possible hearing of the servants; that class of person never understands a joke."

Narcissus rubbed the top of his head—a trick of his in perplexity.

"But seriously—it has only this moment occurred to me—couldn't the drawings be conveyed to him in due form through the commandant of the prison? The poor fellow owes *us* no grudge: I believe he would be eager to do us this small service. And really they have made such a mess of the stones——"

"Impossible: out of the question! And I may say now and once for all that the mention of that unhappy youth is repugnant to me. By good fortune we escaped being compromised by him, and I have refrained from reminding you that your patronage of him was, to say the least, indiscreet——"

"God bless me! You don't suggest, I hope, that I encouraged him to escape?"

"I suggest nothing. But I am honestly glad to be quit of him, and take some satisfaction in remembering that I detested the fellow from the first. He had too much cleverness with his bad style; or, if you prefer it, was sufficiently like a gentleman to be dangerous. Pah! For his particular offence I would have had the old hulks maintained with all their severities: as it is, the posturer may find Dartmoor pretty stiff, but will yet have the consolation of herding with his betters."

Strangely enough this speech

did more to fix Dorothea's resolve than all she had read or heard of the rigours of the war-prison. Gently reared though she was, physical suffering seemed to her less intolerable than to be held unjustly in this extreme of scorn. This was the deeper wrong; and putting herself in her lover's place, feeling with his feelings, she knew it to be by far the deeper. In Dartmoor he shared the sufferings of men unfortunate but not despicable, punished for fighting in their country's cause. But here was a moral punishment deserved by none but the vilest; and she had helped to bring it—was allowing it to rest—upon a hero.

In the long watches of that night it never occurred to her that the brutality of her brother's contempt was overdone. And Endymion, not given to self-questioning at any time, was probably unconscious of a dull wrath revenging itself for many pin-pricks of Master Raoul's clever tongue. Endymion Westcote, like many pompous men, usually hurt somebody when he indulged in a joke, and for this cause perhaps had a nervous dislike of wit in others. Dull in taking a jest, but almost preternaturally clever in suspecting one, he had disliked Raoul's sallies in proportion as they puzzled him. The remembrance of them rankled, and this had been his bull-roar of revenge.

He spent the next morning in his office; and returning at three in the afternoon, retired to the library to draw up the

usual monthly report required of him as Commissary. He had been writing for an hour or more when Dorothea tapped at the door and entered.

Endymion did not observe her pallor; indeed he scarcely looked up.

"Ah! You have come for a book? Make as little noise then as possible, that's a good soul. You interrupted me in a column of figures."

He began to add them up afresh, tapping the table with the fingers of his left hand, as his custom was when counting. Dorothea waited. The addition made, he entered it, resting three shapely finger-tips on the table's edge for the number to be carried over.

"I wish to speak with you particularly."

He laid down his pen resignedly. Her voice was urgent, and he knew well enough that the occasion must be urgent when Dorothea interrupted his work.

"Anything wrong?"

"It—it's about M. Raoul."

His eyebrows went up, but only to contract again upon a magisterial frown.

"Really, after the request I was obliged to make to Narcissus last night—you were present, I believe? Is it possible that I failed to make plain my distaste?"

"Ah, but listen! It is no question of distaste, but of a great wrong. He was not trying to escape: he told you an untruth, to—to save——"

Endymion had picked up a paper-knife, and leaned back, tapping his teeth with it.

"Do you know?" he said, "I suspected something of this kind from the first, though I had no idea you shared the knowledge. Zeally's cleverness struck me as a trifle too—ah—phenomenal for belief. I scented some low intrigue; and Polly's dismissal may indicate my pretty shrewd guess at the culprit."

"But it was not Polly!"

"Eh?" Endymion sat bolt upright.

"You must not blame Polly. It was I whom M. Raoul came to see that night."

He stared at her, incredulous. "My dear Dorothea, are you quite insane?"

"He wished to see me—to speak with me: he gave the girl a note for me. I knew nothing about it until I went upstairs that night and found her at the boudoir window. M. Raoul was outside. He had arrived before she could deliver the message."

"Quite so!" with a nasally derisive laugh. "And you really need me to point out how prettily those turtles were be-fooling you?"

"Indeed no, it was not that."

He struck the table impatiently with the paper-knife. "My dear woman, *do* exert some common-sense! What in the name of wonder could the fellow have to discuss with *you* at that hour? Your pardon—if, finding no apparent limits to your innocence, I assume it to be illimitable and point out that he would scarcely break bounds and play Romeo beneath the window of a middle-aged lady for the purpose of discussing

water-colours with her, or the exploits of Vespasian."

The taunt brought red to Dorothea's cheeks and stung her into courage.

"He came to see me," she persisted. Her voice dropped a little. "I had come to feel a regard for M. Raoul, and he——" She could not go on. Her eyes met her brother's for a moment, then fell before them.

What she expected, she could not tell: certainly she did not expect what happened, and his sudden laughter smote her like a whip. It broke in a shout of high uncontrollable mirth, and he leaned back and shook in his chair until the tears streamed down his cheeks.

"You!" he gasped. "*You!* Oh—oh—oh!"

She stood beneath the scourge, silent. She felt it curl across and bite the very flesh, and thought it was killing her. Her bosom heaved.

It ceased. He sat upright again, wiping his eyes. "But it's incredible!" he protested; "the scoundrel has fooled you all along. Yes, of course," he pondered, "that explains the success of the trick, which otherwise was clumsy beyond belief; in fact, its clumsiness puzzled me. But how was I to guess——" He pulled himself up on the edge of another guffaw. "Look here, Dorothea, be sensible. It's clear as daylight the fellow was after Polly, and made you his cat's-paw. Face it, my dear; face it and conquer your illusions. I understand it must cost you some suffering; but, after all, you must find some blame in your-

self—in your heart, I mean, not in your conduct. Doubtless your conduct showed weakness, or he would never have dared—but there, I can trust my sister. Face it: the thing's absurd—you a woman of thirty-eight (or is it thirty-nine?), and he, if I may judge from appearances, young enough to be your son! Polly was his game—the deceitful little slut: you must see it for yourself. And, after all, it's more natural. Immoral, I've no doubt——”

He paused in the middle of his harangue. A parliamentary candidate (unsuccessful) for Axcester had once dared to poke fun at Endymion Westcote for having asserted in a public speech that indecency was worse than immorality. For the life of him Endymion could never see where the joke came in; but the fellow had illustrated it with such a wealth of humorous instances, and had kept his ignorant audience for twenty minutes in such fits of laughter, that he never afterwards approached the antithesis, but he skirted it with a red face.

And Dorothea?

The scourge might cut into her heart: it could not reach the image of Raoul she shielded there. She knew her lover too well, that he was incapable of this baseness. But the injurious charge, diverted from him, fell upon her own defences, and breaking them, let in the cruel light at length on her passion, her folly. This was how the world would see it. . . . Yes, yes, Raoul was right—there is no enemy comparable

with Time. Looks, fortune, birth, breed, unequal hearts and minds,—all these Love may confound and play with; but Time, which divides the dead from the living, sets easily between youth and age a gulf which not only forbids Love but derides—

“Age, I do abhor thee;
Youth, I do adore thee;
O my Love, my Love is young!”

She could give counsel, sympathy, care; could delight in his delights, hope in his hopes, melt with his woes, and, having wept a little, find comfort for them. She could thrill at his footsteps, blush at his salutation, sit happily beside him and talk or be silent, reading his moods. He might fill her waking day, haunt her dreams, in the end pass into prison for her sake, having crowned love with martyrdom. And the world would laugh as Endymion had laughed! Her hands went up to shut out the roar of it. A coarse amour with Polly—that could be understood. Polly was young. Polly . . .

“What will you do?” she heard herself asking, and could scarcely believe the voice belonged to her.

“Do? Why, if my theory be right,—and I hope I've convinced you,—I see no use in meddling. The girl is respectably married. It will cause her quite unnecessary trouble if we rip this affair open again. Her husband will have just ground for complaint, and it might—I need not point out—be a little awkward, eh?”

For the first time in her life

Dorothea regarded her brother with something like contempt. But the flash gave way to a look of weary resolve.

"Then I must tell the truth—to others," she said.

It confounded him for a moment. But although here was a new Dorothea, belying all experience, his instinct for handling men and women told him at once what had happened. He had driven her too far. He was even clever enough to foresee that winning her back to obedience would be a ticklish, almost a desperate, business; and even sensitive enough to reddens at his mistake.

"You do not agree with my view?" he asked, tapping the table slowly.

"I disbelieve it. I have no right to believe it, even if I had the power. He is in prison.

You must help me to set him free. If not——"

"He cannot possibly return to Axcester."

"Oh, what is that to me?" she cried with sudden impatience. Then her tone fell back to its dull level. "I have not been pleading for myself."

"No, no: I understand." His brow cleared, as a man's who faces a bad business and resolves to go through with it. "Well, there is only one way to spare you and every one. We must get him a cartel."

"A cartel?"

"Yes—get him exchanged, and sent home to his friends. The War Office owes me something, and will no doubt oblige me in a small affair like this without asking questions. Oh, certainly it can be managed. I will write at once."

(To be concluded.)

RECENT FICTION.

IN discussing a few of the novels of the last six months or so, it is right and proper, on many accounts which it were superfluous to specify, that due precedence should be awarded to Mr Kipling. 'Kim'¹ is in some respects his most ambitious and elaborate work, and having, we confess, "shied" at 'Stalky & Co.,' we fell with a double portion of alacrity upon a "new Kipling" which held out hopes of proving equal to the old ones. Nor have we been disappointed. Mr Kipling has decidedly "acquired merit" by this his latest essay. There is fascination, almost magic, in every page of the delightful volume, whose attractiveness is enhanced by illustrations of (to our mind) superlative excellence.

Kim, the eponymous hero, is a white boy, a *pukka sahib*: the son, in short, of Kimball O'Hara, late sergeant in the Mavericks, and his wife, once a nursery-maid in the colonel's family. Left an orphan at an early age, he has been brought up in the town of Lahore, nominally by a native woman of no character at all, and in reality, upon the educational principles which found so much favour with the elder Mr Weller, and find so little at the present day with many men less wise than he. Kim has thus, when we make his acquaintance, acquired a considerable knowledge of mankind

and their ways, in addition to the nickname of "Friend of all the world." He is "hand in glove with men who led lives stranger than anything Haroun Al Raschid dreamed of: and he lived in a life wild as that of the Arabian Nights, but missionaries and secretaries of charitable societies could not see the beauty of it."

To him enter an aged lama from Tibet, on pilgrimage, in quest of "the river which washes away all taint of sin." Kim forthwith becomes his *chela* or attendant (the word may or may not be at bottom identical with the Highland *gillie*), and they set out together *en route* for Benares, *via* Umballa, where Kim has been charged with a commission to perform by Mahbub Ali, an Afghan horse-dealer, who is in the pay of the Survey Department of the Indian Government. We cannot detail the incidents which mark the journey by rail and road of this singular pair of travellers. We can only note that they separate for a time, after Kim has fallen in with his father's old regiment, the colonel and chaplains of which are bent upon taking charge of him. The lama, however, insists upon paying for Kim's education. "Education is greatest blessing if of best sorts. Otherwise no earthly use." Such are his views, as

¹ Kim. By Rudyard Kipling. London: Macmillan. 1901.

tersely and sensibly expressed by a professional letter-writer, in Baboo English. Accordingly, Kim is sent to the school of St Francis Xavier at Lucknow, there to accumulate such information as may be useful to him in after-life. For already he is practically destined by the powers that be to the playing of the Great Game — which, being interpreted, means the Secret Service of the Government. His schooling over, he is almost immediately launched upon his career, wherein, at the outset, he acquits himself, “in a dam-tight place” (as Babu Hurree Chunder Mookerjee expresses it), with such sagacity and discretion as to please “all the Department.” Having foregathered once more with the lama, he has much wandering in his company among the hills, with many exciting adventures, in which the fascinating Hurree plays a prominent part. The story concludes with Kim’s recovery from a serious illness, brought on by over-fatigue, and with the successful issue of the lama’s quest. In other words, the venerable priest falls into a brook, while in a brown study, and, having been with difficulty rescued from a watery grave, believes that he has at length been washed in the river of the Arrow which was the object of his search.

The character of ‘Kim’ is from first to last a masterly conception. As a study of adolescence — of the progress from boyhood to youth, and from youth to early manhood

—it is incomparably fresh and true: full of the delight of the artificer in the work of his hands, of the joy that comes from nothing so much as from the sense of successful achievement. The pride of the labourer in a task well performed has always been a congenial and favourite theme with Mr Kipling; and we know of no other which, once duly appreciated, is likely to do so much for the maintenance of our empire in all its manifold interests. Over and above Kim, there is a portrait-gallery of unusual extent and interest. Mahbub Ali, the old Ressaldar, the Rajah’s widow, and Baboo Hurree, are the chief of those who find a place in it. And in the background there is always the impressive figure of the lama, whose mysterious apophthegms about the Wheel and the most Excellent Law form a deep and solemn accompaniment, as it were, to the music of the whole composition. You do not stop to inquire whether he or any one else is true to life. You *know* they are; you accept them all without question or reservation or cavil. That absolute perfection, however, may not be predicated of his work, Mr Kipling has been obliging enough to throw in a couple of characters of whom so much cannot be said. Both Mr Bennett, the Anglican, and Father Victor, the Roman Catholic, chaplain, strike us as being conventional and commonplace—just the sort of personages whom we have learned to expect from Mr Kipling’s imitators.

But it is neither in the fable (exciting and ingenious though it be) nor in the portrayal of character (however skilful and convincing) that the charm of 'Kim' consists. Its secret lies in the wonderful panorama it unrolls before us of the life of the great Peninsula over whose government England has now presided for more than a century. We despair of giving our readers any adequate conception of the glorious variety of the feast here spread before them. The kaleidoscopic quality, if we may venture so to call it, of Mr Kipling's genius, has never before been displayed on so extensive a scale or to such great advantage. Turn to the description of the wayfarers on the Grand Trunk Road (too long, unfortunately, for transcription here), and consider for a moment the patient industry, the protracted observation, the thorough knowledge, which go to the making of these three pages. The thought is merely astounding; and one feels inclined in one's bewilderment to fall back upon the convenient and plausible theory that Mr Kipling knows everything by instinct. That he knew much of native life we were aware already, but how much he knew we had not—perhaps have not yet—fathomed. Take one of the Strickland series of his stories: expand it, strengthen it, add indefinite multiplicity of detail to it; and you have the formula for

producing a 'Kim.' But let the adventurous aspirant see that his hand is well "in" before he tries it.

We may not leave Mr Kipling's book without brief reference to the sense of exhilaration with which it cannot but be read by all Britons who are lovers of their country. The episode of the Russian and the French explorer, whose discomforture is so dexterously engineered by Hurree, is to us one of the most pleasing, as it is certainly one of the most entertaining, in the book. To the despicable minority of our countrymen who invariably lavish their sympathy and support upon the king's enemies, the whole tone of the work will be as gall and wormwood. Mr Kipling lifts the veil, and reveals a wheel or two of the machinery at work night and day for the preservation of our Indian Empire. Mr Sydney C. Grier has shown us, in that truly admirable novel, 'The Warden of the Marches,'¹ how the best-oiled wheels may be brought almost to a standstill, and the most carefully concerted precautions rendered all but nugatory, through the obstinacy and ignorance of a single opinionative official. In truth, 'Kim' and 'The Warden,' like the obverse and reverse of a coin, are but two sides of the same piece. In the one we have the secret service, in the other we have the military who come into play when the duty of the secret service has

¹ The Warden of the Marches. By Sydney C. Grier. Edinburgh: Blackwood. 1901.

been discharged. And if Mr Grier must yield to Mr Kipling in force and versatility of talent, he may console himself with the reflection that to be second to Mr Kipling is almost as great a distinction as it would have been to be second to Eclipse in a certain famous and proverbial race. —We have lingered too long, however, in India, and must take flight without delay to another portion of his Majesty's domains.

The contributions of Australasia to English literature have hitherto, perhaps, been more numerous than distinguished. With the exception of Adam Lindsay Gordon's poems, in many of which there is more than a mere flash of the true fire, and the novels of Mr Rolf Boldrewood, whose 'Robbery under Arms' is as stirring a narrative of adventure as a man need desire to read, they are for the most part little known to the public at home. But we see no reason why the writings of Mr Lawson,¹ already favourably regarded in his own continent, should not attract attention wherever the English language is spoken, so keen is his eye for the essential, so brisk and business-like his faculty of presentation. His models, it is easy to guess, have been Mr Bret Harte and Mr Kipling, and it would be affectation to pretend that he has not reproduced with too punctual a fidelity some of the vices into which these two great masters of the short story have occasionally fallen.

With what Mr Lawson can do at his best the readers of 'Maga' are not unacquainted, and they may be glad of the opportunity of refreshing their memories with some of their old favourites brought together in his later volume. "Telling Mrs Baker," for example, is a sketch which will bear more than two or three readings. The earlier collection exhibits much the same excellences and much the same defects, though the former easily outweigh the latter. Here and there the pathos is overdone, at least so it seems to the less robust taste of the mother-country; and, as a counterpart, the humour is sometimes of a rather cheap and obvious kind, —too apt to turn upon the merely prosaic fact of inebriety. But these defects detract little from the merit of Mr Lawson's work as a whole. The local atmosphere and colour of the Bush are brought before our senses with a wonderful effect of reality. We consort with "new chums," and "rouseabouts," and "jackeroos"; we boil our "billy" and carry our "swag"; and throughout we feel absolutely confident that we have it all as Mr Lawson has seen it with his own eyes, and not as he has picked it up from some one else.

Mr Lawson is equally at home in describing life in an Australian city (as that excellent little sketch, "Board and Residence," testifies), and life at the back of beyond: "up-country"; "out-back"; "the

¹ The Country I come from. By Henry Lawson. Joe Wilson and his Mates. By the Same. Edinburgh: Blackwood. 1901.

never-never land." It is in the latter region, however, that his foot may be said to be on his native heath, and the majority of his most characteristic stories are those of which the scene is laid

"Where lone Mount Desolation lies,
Mounts Dreadful and Despair."

"The Drover's Wife," "The Darling River," "A Rough Shed," and "Jimmy Grimshaw's Wooing"—these will give an appetising taste of Mr Lawson's quality; and for those who can enjoy the humours of the road, we will add the diverting yarn of "Stiffner and Jim," which sometimes verges on comic-journalese, but contrives, in the upshot, to steer clear of it. "Some day," says Mr Lawson, "an Australian writer will come along who'll remind the critics and readers of Dickens, Carlyle, and Thackeray mixed." The combination is a curious one, and we cannot say that Mr Lawson reminds us of any one of those three great men in particular, though, of course, he shows traces fresh or derivative, of the ubiquitous influence of Dickens. But we hope that at no distant date he will give us a novel in which the results of his experience may be welded into an orderly and coherent whole.

The life which is here depicted is very far indeed from being a bed of roses. It is rough, coarse, unceremonious. There is much drinking and much swearing. That is not Mr Lawson's fault; yet we wish that some conventional literary substitute for bad language

could be devised which would obviate the necessity of employing synonyms almost as vulgar and quite as provoking as the expressions they are meant to represent. There is much hardship, and suffering, and squalor. Thank God! there are brave hearts of men and women to meet it. But we have often thought, in turning over Mr Lawson's pages, how infinitely preferable is the life of a ploughman in Northumberland or the lowland counties of Scotland to that of the squatter or shearer in Australia! The one is, comparatively speaking, a life of comfort, we had almost said of luxury. The necessities of existence are assured; there is a sound roof to cover the head; there is as much fuel as man can want; there is enough of milk, and to spare, for the children. But the other is a life of grinding anxiety and toil, relieved only by interludes of overwhelming disaster. Many a young man who has emigrated from the rural districts to better himself in Australia, in Texas, in Mexico, has had to undergo privations and labours which, had he remained at home, he need never have known. One-tenth of the series of calamities enumerated in Mr Lawson's sketch entitled "Settling on the Land" would drive the British agriculturist to instant distraction and despair.

But Mr Lawson, like all true Australians, is proud of the land of his nativity, and of her gallant and indomitable sons. We could wish that this

most legitimate and justifiable feeling were wholly free from a somewhat acrid and self-assertive tone which now and then makes itself perceived. It is characteristic of new communities, and indeed of certain old ones, to be a little thin-skinned, a little too alert to take offence, and to offer indignant apologies where none are needed. The same defect is apparent in a greater degree in a story to which Mr Lawson has stood sponsor.¹ But it is atoned for by the extraordinary force and sincerity of which Miles Franklin is unquestionably mistress. 'My Brilliant Career' is a book instinct with a strong personality; and the frame of mind of which it is significant is not unlike that which has found its noblest expression in the work of Emily Brontë.

"Elaborately effective and seductive as long as one should happen to think so, elaborately nauseous when one had ceased so to think" — such is the description which in her new novel² Lucas Malet applies to one of the characters, a French poet of the decadent order, to wit; and it so happens that the description fits the book itself with an admirable nicety — particularly the "elaborately nauseous" part of it. Our readers may remember the blacksmith, turned doctor, in Gillies's 'Reminiscences of Sir Walter Scott' (quoted by Lockhart), whose practice depended

upon the use of two simples, "just *laudamy* and *calamy*," and who, when Sir Walter expressed a not unnatural surprise, protested that "Onyhow, it wad be lang before it makes up for Flodden!" But neither "laudamy" nor "calamy" is half so nauseous a drug as "Calmady." There is a rich and clinging flavour about it of the Anatomical Museum, where, in consideration of a few coppers, the inquisitive bumpkin may sup full of unspeakable horrors. No doubt, it has attained very considerable popularity. There are many people in the world with a keen nose for the combination of the loathsome and the lickish; and who, when they get what they want, can fill the short intervals of cessation from nuzzling in the stuff with a great deal of high-flown language about "power" and "daring" and "genius." Those of our readers who glance at the weekly reviews have probably a sufficient notion of the plot of this story; and we do not propose to occupy our pages by entering into details for the benefit of those who have not. Let us dismiss this bad dream by summing it up, in the phrase of the bookseller's catalogue, as "extremely curious and disgusting," and pass on to something cleaner and more wholesome.

There is a certain type of novel which may be classed most conveniently as, above everything else, a "circulating library

¹ My Brilliant Career. By Miles Franklin. With an Introduction by Henry Lawson. Edinburgh: Blackwood. 1901.

² The History of Sir Richard Calmady: A Romance. By Lucas Malet. London: Methuen. 1901.

book," and two better specimens of the kind could not be produced than the new works of Mr Marion Crawford¹ and Mr Stanley Weyman.² They are both written by authors who have a large public, and who never fob that public off with scamped work. And both, the romance of glass-blowing and the romance of St Bartholomew, are a welcome relief from the "romance" of pathology *plus* "passion." Mr Crawford pitches his story in the Venice of the fifteenth century, and an excellent tale it is. There is no great originality in the characters. We meet the elderly and extremely wealthy father; the poor and alien waif in his employment; the lovely daughter who falls in love with this same Ricardo Whittingtonio, if we may venture to call him by the generic name, with a little local colour added; the dissolute and weak young nobleman for whom the hand of the lovely daughter is designed,—and so forth and so forth, all in a most harmonious and picturesque setting. Needless to say, the objections of Aldermanno Fitzwarrenio to his daughter's match with Whittingtonio are overcome in the long-run, and our old friend the "Venetian oligarchy" is invoked to relieve the fortunate lover from the disability to become a full-blown glass-blower, under which he, in common with all foreigners, had hitherto laboured. No very striking originality here, the

sagacious reader will observe; but much ease, fluency, pleasantness, and dexterity, which are all qualities to give thanks for. In 'Count Hannibal,' too, we feel that we recognise an old friend. It is full of exciting adventures and hair-breadth escapes, and is as like any other of Mr Weyman's novels as pea to pea. The hero is, of course, a masterful, and at first sight a forbidding and disagreeable, swashbuckler; but he develops a thousand chivalrous and manly qualities upon further acquaintance. So the heroine finds out, who has not only, like all Mr Weyman's heroines, "begun with a little aversion," but has actually been engaged to another man who turns out to be a selfish poltroon. Here, then, are all the ingredients of a capital story, which will help several hours to pass most pleasantly. Only, one cannot help wondering if Mr Weyman is not going to do rather more some day, and why he has failed to make one inch of progress in his art since the 'Gentleman of France.' His touch has gained nothing in delicacy, and the real subtleties of human character continue altogether to elude his grasp.

Mr Weyman, to say truth, might do worse than take a lesson from Mr Munro, whose latest essay in fiction³ will, we are disposed to think, enhance his already high reputation. We get away from the Highlands and Argyllshire this

¹ Marietta. By F. Marion Crawford. London: Macmillan. 1901.

² Count Hannibal. By Stanley J. Weyman. London: Smith, Elder, & Co. 1901.

³ The Shoes of Fortune. By Neil Munro. London: Isbister. 1901.

time, and find a hero who was "raised" in the remoter parts of Renfrewshire, where that county "marches" with Ayrshire, not many miles from Newton Mearns. Paul Greig is a hero of the David Balfour stamp, and something, it must be owned, of a laggard in love. This type of dense and modest young man has seen a good deal of service since the days of 'Lorna Doone,' yet in Mr Munro's hands it comes very tolerably off, and does not appear to be "stale." Paul leaves Scotland because, as he erroneously thinks, he has killed his rival for the hand of Isobel Fortune, in a duel; and at once becomes mixed up in the affairs of the Young Pretender and Clementina Walkinshaw. The latter celebrity is the true heroine of the book, and the picture presented of her and her royal lover is exceedingly well painted. The more reason, perhaps, for fearing that some enthusiastic Jacobite may ere now be on the author's trail, with a mind to do him a mischief. Mr Munro has always been a fastidious and conscientious artist. His model is not very far to seek. Here is a single short sentence which tells the secret. "We sat in a drift of sand, breathing the inebriating sea." That is pure Stevenson, and not bad Stevenson either. But we are heartily glad to note in 'The Shoes of Fortune' an absence of that preciosity of diction which has sometimes been a snare for Mr Munro, as it usually is for all

young writers of any promise; and we are prepared to guarantee for the future that what he loses in euphuism he will more than gain in effectiveness and power.

Mr Crawford, Mr Weyman, and Mr Munro have all taken us back to past ages; but here is Mr Lincoln Green,¹ who would conduct us to an apparently not very remote future. Visions of what lies in store for the race have always commanded a certain amount of popular interest. In recent years Mr Wells's 'Time Machine' has been unquestionably the most powerful attempt to draw the curtain of futurity. Mr Green does not look so far ahead. He figures the artificial production in the present century of a bacillus which is absolutely fatal to mankind, sparing only the aged and worn-out members of the species. The one able-bodied survivor of the accidental "letting lowse" of the *Bacillus paradoxus* is a certain Mr Adam Godwin, a dabbler in bacteriology, who happens luckily to have been inoculated with an antidote to the fatal microbe the day before it begins operations. In a fantasy of this kind it is obvious that almost everything depends upon consistency of conception and minuteness of detail. To achieve complete success, a writer must possess the qualities both of a Swift and a Defoe. Mr Green fulfils that condition—an exacting one—to a remarkable extent. The

¹ The End of an Epoch. By A. Lincoln Green. Edinburgh: Blackwood. 1901.

whole narrative, which possesses the virtue of ingenuity in a high degree, hangs well together, nor have we noted any slips of memory, even in *minutiae*. Towards the end the story becomes positively thrilling, and we recommend the reader to turn to the volume and ascertain for himself upon what a slender thread of circumstance the continuance of the human race is made to depend. The weakest link in the chain is, perhaps, the device by which the enlargement of the bacilli is brought about. We are satisfied that Professor Azrael Falk, for all his eccentricity, would never have taken his brood of microbes with him to the Derby (he is there mistaken for a welsher and treated accordingly), but would have left the pickle jars containing them safely locked up at home.

We are not ashamed to acknowledge our inability to approach anything that has the semblance of a "kailyard" novel without considerable trepidation. The world has had a vast deal too much of the *genre* in the last ten years, and most of it has been infamously done. We shrink from the importunate invitation to share the boisterous and inane hilarity of conventional peasants, or to sympathise with the more subtle vulgarity which encompasses the genteel love-making of probationers, divinity students, and writers' apprentices. Why the actual everyday life of Scotland

should be neglected by purveyors of fiction in favour of something which bears no intelligible relation to fact, and why the characters that live and move around us should be overlooked, to the greater glory of insufferable buffoons and snuffling sentimentalists, are problems of which the solution has long completely baffled us. The more cordial, therefore, is our welcome to any study of Scottish life and character which smacks of reality and testifies to first-hand observation, and the more eagerly do we hail the advent of any work which seems to be the book for which the public has had so weary a spell of waiting. We have always maintained that there is an immense untouched fund of the raw material of fiction in the middle and lower-middle classes of Scotland at the present day. And here, at last, with the eye to see, the judgment to select, and the gift to record, is a writer who has had the courage to draw upon this ample store which lay so invitingly open to all.

The subject of Mr George Douglas's remarkable novel¹ may be compendiously described as the decline and fall of John Gourlay, corn-factor, carting contractor, and leading personage in the small west-country burgh of Barbie. Gourlay is presented to us as a strong man with a mean understanding, indomitable pride, and the roughest of rough tongues. The whole town is jealous of his prosper-

¹ The House with the Green Shutters. By George Douglas. London: Macqueen. 1901.

ity with an abnormal jealousy, which his overbearing and brutal character has served but to inflame. He resides in the house which gives its title to the book, and where he rules with a rod of iron over a slatternly wife, a stupid son, and a consumptive daughter.

The first blow at his prosperity is struck by James Wilson, the mole-catcher's son, who returns to Barbie from Aberdeen with some money in his purse, and sets up an "Emporium" in his native place. The circular which he issues to the public of Barbie and the neighbourhood on that occasion is admirable—worthy of a place beside Sam Gerridge's announcement "to the nobility, gentry, and inhabitants of the Borough Road and its vicinity," and almost on a plane with the incomparable advertisements which Wackford Squeers and S. Pecksniff were wont to insert in the newspapers when in quest of confiding pupils. We cannot recount in detail the arts by which Wilson gradually undermines Gourlay's prosperity in business. It is enough to say that he amply satisfies a bitter grudge against his established rival both by direct and by indirect means. Wilson sends his boy, a smart and likely lad, to the Skeighan High School. Gourlay must needs do the same, and cap his folly by insisting upon young John proceeding, against his will, to Edinburgh University. There is a fine stroke in the domestic conversation which takes place before the son is put to the High School:—

"'Ay man, Johnnie,' said his mother, maternal fondness coming out in support of her husband, 'you should be glad your father can allow ye the opportunity. Eh, but it's a grand thing, a gude education! You may rise to be a minister.'

"Her ambition could no further go. But Gourlay seemed to have formed a different opinion of the sacred calling. 'It's a' he's fit for,' he growled."

John's career at the university, in spite of a single flash of success, ends in disaster. He has "the nerves to feel," but not the brains to think, and so he seeks refreshment and consolation in the bottle. The story of his descent of the road which leads to perdition alike of soul and body is no new one, but never has it been more powerfully and faithfully told: without the least exaggeration, but with no extenuation of its inexpressibly sordid and shameful incidents. Rusticated finally by the Senatus, John returns home, where his father's taunts drive him into the crime of parricide. He finally makes away with himself, whereupon his mother and sister take their own lives, anticipating by only a few short weeks, or even days, the inexorable decree of nature. The story winds up in a cloud of gloom and horror, which only talents scarcely distinguishable from genius could render tolerable.

This bare outline of the plot conveys no impression of the unity and coherence of the design as a whole. Every cause produces its inevitable effect; every action is prompted by its adequate motive. In the metaphor of our venerable friend

the lama, Gourlay, by his insolence to the son of Toddling Johnny, "the mowdie man," loosed an Act upon the world, and, as a stone thrown into a pool, so spread the consequences, no man can tell how far. There is no hint of the irrelevant or superfluous in the conduct of the piece; no impertinent love interest intrudes to point the way to cheap and nauseating sentiment; and a few rash generalisations as to what Scotsmen say or do are scarce noticeable save as reminders of the fact that the author, after all, is of the same clay as the rest of his brethren of the quill or the typewriter.

It is a tradition of the Scottish novel that there must be a "chorus" of village worthies to comment upon the conduct of the principals. The "bodies" of Barbie, who perform that indispensable function, are, with the possible exception of the Baker (an enthusiastic votary of Burns), a despicable and unholy crew, capable of none but the meanest motives and the most venomous judgments; avid of money, greedy of drink. Yet who shall dare to say that in their veins there does not beat the pulse of life? Provost Connal, Deacon Allardyce, Tam Wylie, Johnny Coe—are their counterparts not to be found in every burrows-town in Scotland? By a hundred skilful touches Mr Douglas discriminates one from the other—by

peculiarities of temperament, by subtle variations in their mode of hating their neighbour, even by minute differentiations of speech and pronunciation, such as the Deacon's lisp (that curious prolonged sibilant, we take it, which seems to issue from between the all but clenched teeth, and which, nevertheless, no alphabet yet invented can reproduce) or the "fancy English" of Sandy Toddle, who had travelled as a pedlar in the midlands of South Britain.¹ It is not a very flattering or agreeable picture of the community of Barbie with which Mr Douglas presents us, and the other minor characters do nothing to relieve the gloom. Gibson, the builder ("cunning Johnny"), is a thorough-paced rascal; Templandmuir, the bonnet-laird, is a weak, tipsy fool. But again, we ask with confidence, are they not well-conceived, are they not thrown on to the canvas with a firm and unhesitating brush? Their very dialect is unlovely: yet it is the dialect of the Scotland of to-day. For they speak not the conventional, or literary, vernacular, but a jargon interspersed with fragments of stale modern slang, polluted by the leavings of the humour of a cheap press. They talk of things "going to smash," and of men "running a business"; a ruined man they describe as a "goner"; and "where do I

¹ This characteristic affectation of Sandy's reminds us irresistibly of the carter, described by Scott in a letter to Morritt ('Life,' ed. 1893, p. 227), who boasted that his son, in reality a great booby of twenty, designed for the Church, could "knap English with any one, having twice driven his father's cart to Etal coalhill"!

come in?" is the despairing cry of avarice, itching to participate in ill-gotten gain. Hideous, no doubt; but unfortunately all too true to life. We plead, however, for a more sparing use of the word "splurge," which, as verb and noun, appears to be more or less equivalent to "splash." However expressive the vocable may be, Mr Douglas should remember that it is always possible to have too much of a good thing. Also, we are surprised to find "owetioner" for auctioneer, having innocently supposed the curious corruption "*uctioneer*" to be wellnigh universal in Scotland.

The chief characters are indicated with equal force and clearness. John Gourlay, the elder, is a masterpiece. We catch the "black glower in his e'en"; we seem to hear the tones of his rasping voice; his "*Eih?*" at the end of a sentence makes us shake in our shoes. Here is a trait which speaks volumes, — worth a thousand generalities as to what the Scots do and what the Scots don't.

"The Deacon limped forward on his thin shanks to the middle of the road.

"'It's a fine morning, Mr Gourlay,' he simpered.

"'There's noathing wrong with the morning,' grunted Gourlay, *as if there was something wrong with the Deacon.*"

Mrs Gourlay and the son are equally good. And the whole setting of the story is in strict keeping: the effect of moral squalor and degradation is sug-

gested with a rare abstinence from preaching and declamation. Critics should never be disposed to use the word "tragedy" lightly. There may be much that is terrible and awful in a story without its being entitled to so distinguished a name. But we own that if any work dealing with human beings of the Gourlay type can claim to be brought under that category, it is the novel now before us. Few writers of this generation have had the courage to employ the time-honoured device of "tragic irony" so boldly as Mr Douglas, and none that we can call to mind have employed it with such conspicuous success as he has done in the scene in which the unsuspecting postman discovers the shocking events with which the work closes.

For external surroundings Mr Douglas has a sharp eye. The opening description of "the Square" of Barbie in the early morning, with the frowsy chamber-maid "pounding the bass against the end of the house," is extraordinarily vivid; and no less good is the sketch of James Wilson's parlour, with the flower-pot and the green woollen mat, the shiny horsehair sofa, and the sampler on the wall, "which informed the world that there was no place like home." Smollett and Dickens, those two great masters of "interiors," need not have disowned it. But perhaps Mr Douglas's most striking gift, from a superficial point of view, is

his power of reproducing the personal appearance of his characters by means of a number of minute, but accurate and relentless, touches. Take, for example, this vignette of Mr Struthers, the parish minister (the only cleric in the book, we are thankful to say, save the Free Church minister, and we catch no more than a glimpse of *his* back):—

“He had big splay feet, short stout legs, and a body of such bulging bulbosity [‘bulging bulbosity’ would have struck Polonius as ‘good’] that all the droppings of his spoon—which were many—were caught on the round of his black waistcoat, which always looked as if it had just been spattered by a grey shower. His eyebrows were bushy and white, and the hairs slanting up and out rendered the meagre brow even narrower than it was. His complexion, more especially in cold weather, was a dark crimson. The purply colour of his face was intensified by the pure whiteness of the side whiskers projecting stiffly by his ears; and in mid-week, when he was unshaven, his redness revealed more plainly, in turn, the short gleaming stubble that lay like rime on his chin. His eyes goggled, and his manner at all times was that of a staring and earnest self-importance.”

Or take the description of Wilson, of which we can cite no more than the single sentence, that in a strong light “the suspicion of his unwashedness became a certainty”; or that of Mrs Gourlay, in her wrath, with “the two scraggy muscles of her neck standing out long and thin as she screamed.” These specimens will suffice to point our moral.

That all this sort of writing

is abundantly clever we will-ingly acknowledge. But it has one flaw which is absent from the greatest art—it betrays a spirit of personal animosity. The author seems to approve himself vindictive, merciless, savage. His mood is that of a terrier worrying a rat. Now, one infallible note of the highest art is to be dispassionate, impassive. The presence of this note in Miss Austen’s works is one of the countless proofs of that lady’s claim to stand in the very highest rank of novelists. She handles all her characters—even her Mr Collins and her Mrs Elton—tenderly, as if she loved them. Miss Ferrier, on the other hand, can never contain herself. Mr Duncan M’Dow, perhaps her most amusing puppet, is the sort of clergyman of whom she strongly disapproved in real life; and so she “lets him have it” as hot as she knows how. The result, as in the scene of the famous luncheon party at the manse, is intensely amusing, but we have never closed the concluding volume of ‘Destiny’ without a sneaking instinct of compassion for the reverend gentleman, and a hope that he was spared to get his longed-for “decreet,” and to enjoy his “augmentation.”

This, then, we take to be the pitfall in Mr Douglas’s path. He must bridle his tongue; he must not let his feelings, however justifiable, get the better of him. And, above all, he must curb a propensity to dwell with over-emphasis upon disagreeable physical peculiarities,

particularly in the case of his female characters. To make capital out of the defects incident to the ravages of disease or time is what anybody can do; but it is unworthy of a man of Mr Douglas's abilities. This said, however (and no review is complete without a little admonition), we have nothing further to offer in the way of warning or advice. In the course of the next few months Mr Douglas will probably from time to time find himself "evened" with Balzac. But we should suppose that, like the man of sense we take him for, he will be satisfied with a parallel nearer home. He must be indeed ambitious who

aspires to outdo John Galt at his best; and Mr Douglas reminds us more of the author of 'The Provost' and 'The Entail' than any writer who has flourished since Galt's death, with the exception of Mrs Oliphant in certain of her moods. The field he has selected is, as we have said, an ample one, and as yet he has turned up a mere corner of it. But we would fain cherish the hope that in him the twentieth century may find one who will sustain the best traditions of Scottish fiction more worthily than the numerous writers who did their best to degrade them during the last decade of its predecessor.

THE STATE OF INDIA.

THE Act of Parliament which transferred the government of India from the East India Company to the Crown provided that the Secretary of State in Council should lay before the Parliament in May every year a return of the revenue and expenditure of India in such form as should best exhibit the moral and material progress and condition of the country. All who are desirous of obtaining some correct information regarding the development and administration of our splendid dependency should study the statement exhibiting "The Moral and Material Progress and Condition of India during the year 1899-90," recently ordered by the House of Commons to be printed. The statement is mainly based on the administration reports of the different local governments, and is well arranged; but it suffers from being compiled by one who evidently has no practical knowledge of Indian administration. No attempt is made to discuss the grave problems presented to the public, nor to guide the reader through the recesses and labyrinths of the Indian detail. At this time, when that vast and varied continent has been visited by a series of calamities unexampled in the history of our rule, a brief exposition of the internal administration of the country, and of the physical and mental condition of its inhabitants,

founded on the materials supplied by the Blue-Book, but free from the pessimism of a certain school of writers and the optimism of the Indian bureaucracy, may be of service in removing false impressions, and in supplying materials for a mature judgment. The public opinion of England, if well informed, can be of the greatest service in checking the evils inherent in a bureaucratic government, and also in affording the Government of India protection against the inroads of self-interest and ignorance from which a Secretary of State can never be entirely free. We have a warning voice to attend to India. The calamities of the South African war can be traced to the simple source of our not having had steadily before our eyes a general, comprehensive, well-connected, and well-proportioned view of our South African dominion. As Edmund Burke says:—

"If we make ourselves too little for the sphere of our duty, if, on the contrary, we do not stretch and expand our minds to the compass of their object, we may be well assured that everything about us will dwindle by degrees, until at length our concerns are shrunk to the dimensions of our minds. It is not a predilection to mean, sordid, home-bred cares that will avert the consequences of a false estimate of our interest, or prevent the shameful dilapidation into which a great empire must fall by mean reparations upon mighty ruins."

In a country like India, throughout whose greater part

there is no intermediate landlord between the immediate cultivator and the State, and nine-tenths of whose population live on the land, the foundations of national progress and of national prosperity must rest on our revenue administration. In the section of the Blue-Book devoted to the Cadastral Survey we have an account of how the settlement of the land revenue is conducted and the sum taken by Government determined. Each field is classified

"according to its productive value as evidenced by its soil, by the amount of its produce, or by the rent it pays. . . . Then the assessing officer (or settlement officer as he is often called) compiles the information obtained for all the lands in a circle of villages; and on a review of all these data, of the past fiscal history of the tract, of the range of prices, of the accessibility of the markets, and of other general considerations, he proposes rent rates or revenue rates for the several classes of land in the circle. In the determination of rent rates or revenue rates for any tract, the rainfall, the subsoil water-level, and irrigation facilities are important factors; but the improvements made by the owners or occupiers themselves are not held to enhance the assessable value of the land."

The very perfection of our revenue system may, however, become a source of danger. The Roman Empire is an example. The Romans measured and numbered every man's field, and accurately ascertained every cultivator's means; but by the rigorous exactions of a proportionate impost they effectually prevented the accumulation of capital, on which all agricultural and mercantile progress depends. Finlay, in his great work, which every

Indian administrator ought to study, writes:—

"It is always difficult to levy a large amount of direct taxation from the agricultural population without arresting improvement and turning capital away from the cultivation of the land. The Roman Empire, in spite of its admirable survey and the constant endeavours of its legislators to protect agriculture, was impoverished and depopulated by the operation of a direct land-tax and the oppressive fiscal laws it rendered necessary."

A high official who had made his mark as a settlement officer explained to a village official the mathematical perfection of our revenue assessment founded on a proportionate impost. The old Mahratta *patel* listened to the lecture with the deepest interest. Then he heaved a deep sigh. The high official asked him what ailed him. "I was thinking of the death of my brother: he was the cleverest member of our family, and a great mathematician. One day he came to a river, and before fording it he ascertained the depths at various distances across. In some places the stream would be over his head, at another point but ankle-deep, and so forth, and being a mathematician he found the average to be within his depth. He attempted to cross, but, alas! he was drowned."

The manner in which the Government too often neglect native opinion is a blot on our administration. Matters of principle have been sacrificed to the clamour of a noisy but small section of society, while the experience of centuries has

been neglected. The wild writing of a portion—a portion only—of the vernacular press has unfortunately caused men to despise native opinion; but it ought to be borne in mind that there are many honest native critics in the land. They do not deny that much has been done to develop the prosperity of the country; but they have for the past twenty years stoutly maintained that the condition of the peasantry is not so good as Englishmen suppose, owing to restrictions of the pasture-land and the inflexible regularity with which rent is taken in money. The condition of the cultivator is not so bad as an ignorant school of writers would lead us to imagine; but the fact remains that the great question of agricultural indebtedness forces itself upon the Government of India with a yearly increasing strength. At first an attempt was made to check the evil by lowering the demand, but it was discovered that this was only a temporary remedy, and involved a serious loss to the State Exchequer. Native rulers have always imposed far higher rates of assessment, and they have gathered it without an economic revolution. Slowly it dawned on the mind of the English administrator—what the native had seen long before him—that the chief cause of the evil lay in the departure made from the long-established principles of native administration, by substituting an absolutely rigid system of collecting the land revenue for a system which was truly elastic. The native ruler

took a larger share of the crops, but he did not take a fixed sum of money on a fixed day without any regard to the out-turn of the cultivator's fields. Under our rigid system the ryot has to pay as much when crops fail as when they are abundant.

The attempt to fix the revenue for an average of years upon the theory that the exceptionally good years are set off against the exceptionally bad has broken down, as it was bound to break down, in the case of small proprietors. John Stuart Mill has pointed out that the habit of thrift is not learnt until a man has something to save. It was idle to expect that a peasantry who for centuries have had only a bare subsistence would save their money in good years in order to meet the deficiencies of bad ones. The result of the absolute rigidity of our revenue administration has compelled the peasant proprietors to sell or mortgage their estates to pay a demand which the sale of their produce was insufficient to meet. These holdings have passed or are rapidly passing out of their possession, and coming into the hands of bankers and money-lenders. It was the British Government who gave to the Indian peasant the power of transfer, which he never possessed under native rule. It has proved a most mischievous gift, as it will prove a mischievous gift to the Irish peasant. But it is open to question whether, having allowed it for a century, it is now wise to deprive the people of the power. It is our duty

scrupulously to maintain the spirit and the letter of every engagement by which the Government has bound itself in the past.

A restriction of land transfer is wrong from the economic point of view, and can be justified only on the ground of serious political danger. But there is also grave danger of creating political discontent by depriving the people of the power they have so long enjoyed. The Government of India have recently passed two Acts which will impose in some parts of Bombay and in the Punjab certain restrictions on the powers of alienation by the occupier. This legislation, as Lord George Hamilton stated in his Indian Budget speech, "is tentative, and will have to be very closely watched." Before the Mutiny the Government strove honestly to protect the poor, and in doing so were unjust to the rich, and when the storm broke we experienced the ingratitude towards our Government of the peasantry for whom we had incurred so much odium. There are, however, two reforms for checking the evil of agricultural indebtedness regarding whose advantages there can be no serious difference of opinion. The first is a more liberal system of loans to cultivators. It is a perfectly sound transaction for Government. As Lord Mayo said, "It is a system under which money may be lent with perfect security for the great end of making two blades of grass grow where one only, or, more likely in India, none ever grew before. I think that there is no object to which

a portion of the reproductive loans which we yearly intend to raise could be so effectively devoted." He pointed out that the system would not only have the effect of benefiting the people, "but that it will also bring the officers who are engaged in carrying out its provisions into a most agreeable contact with the people, and increase those kindly feelings which ought to exist between the rulers and the ruled."

The Famine Commission of 1880 recommended that the Acts providing for cash loans to the agricultural classes should be so extended as to facilitate the grant of loans for works of improvement, in the purchase of seed and of cattle in times of agricultural distress. It is not stated in the Material Progress Report how far this recommendation has been carried out, and the amounts advanced in the whole of India should have been given in a table. It would also be serviceable to have learnt how far the question has advanced,—whether some final arrangements could not be made for creating a special fund devoted to agricultural loans.

The second great reform, the introduction of a greater element of elasticity into our revenue system, is fraught with administrative difficulties. The general principles were laid down by the Famine Commission of 1880, but it is not easy to apply them in practice. It might not, however, be beyond the power of Indian statesmanship to devise measures by which remissions of revenue should be

made in consideration of real scarcity, and they should be made in ample time, so as to render it unnecessary for a ryot to sell his stock or to borrow at usurious rates. Legislation will not cure agricultural indebtedness if the demand of revenue is not kept within the limits of a fair rent, and if the demand is made when there is no produce, or when it is not ready.

The foregoing measures are in themselves effectual means for improving the economic condition of the people; but irrigation works and railways are the two great instruments for directly developing the productive resources of the country. By giving him a perennial supply of water, the peasant has been enabled to cultivate fields which had lain barren for centuries, while railways enable him to find a market for his surplus produce. It was hardly necessary for the compiler of the Blue-Book to inform the most ignorant globe-trotter that "the nature of the climate and the inequalities of the rainfall will account for the great antiquity of the practice of irrigation in India." It was also hardly necessary to state that "the storage of water in tanks for the purpose of irrigation is very common in Southern India." The writer also draws attention to the magnificence of some of the irrigation canals, which are almost entirely due to British enterprise and skill. The Government has, however, been so absorbed in large schemes of irrigation that they have too often neglected those minor but

invaluable works of agricultural improvement which require no great engineering skill or the expenditure of large sums of money, but can be carried out under local supervision—works such as wells, tanks, and subsidiary channels for irrigation. In the matter of irrigation works, as in our revenue administration, we have not always sufficiently regarded native experience and consulted native opinion. The ryot has always declared his preference for wells as a source of water-supply to canals. This belief was at first regarded as a mere outcome of ignorance and prejudice; but the Famine Commissioners in 1880, influenced by the opinion of an expert like Mr Caird, stated, after a patient and searching inquiry, that "in many localities the irrigation supplied by canals requires to be supplemented at certain seasons by wells, and in some cases the character of the crops and the soil is such that wells are, on the whole, preferable as a source of water-supply to canals." They also added: "There is reason to believe that there is no province in India in some part of which great advantage might not be expected from well-construction on a large scale." The Secretary of State, at the instigation of the Viceroy, has appointed a Commission "to bring together into one focus all forms of irrigation, and lay down, both as regards Government work and private effort, rules for their interlacing, encouragement, and control." The head of the Commission is Sir Colin Scott-Mon-

crieff, whose work in Egypt, as Lord George Hamilton said in the House of Commons, has been so remarkable that it has effaced the recollection of the excellent services which, as an irrigation officer many years ago, he performed in India. Sir Colin's colleagues are Mr Ibbetson (recently appointed to be Home Member of the Viceroy's Council), Mr Higham (a distinguished engineer belonging to the Irrigation Department), and the Hon. Mr Ragaratna Mudaleyar of Madras. No Commission better adapted for the work before them could have been selected.

It is a matter for regret that an equally strong and competent Commission has not been appointed to inquire into the working of the Indian railways. The time has come when they must not only be extended but commercialised. They must be managed more on business principles. Every European merchant in the great capitals of the empire knows the delay and annoyance endured in the despatch of goods, and one can readily believe the complaints of native merchants that the goods lie at the up-country stations far longer than they should, and that they suffer considerable annoyance from railway under-strappers, who, however, it is only fair to add, are their own countrymen. It is also a subject of complaint that villagers, after walking many weary miles to some small station, cannot enter it and get their tickets unless they pay an illegal gratification. The accommodation for natives

in these stations may well be improved. The Blue-Book informs us that there was "an addition of 2760 miles to the whole system during the past two years," but a vast length of iron road remains to be built before India can be said to have anything like a complete system of railway communication. She wants cheap railways, and there is no need in the slow East for fast trains. There is, however, a great need of increasing the comfort of the native passengers. The way third and fourth class passengers are huddled together by some of our Indian railways is a grave scandal. It is the fourth-class passenger, however, who pays for them. But it is not easy to understand how a railway expert from England, without any knowledge of the land or the people, will cure these evils. The Secretary of State said in the House of Commons: "I have little doubt that a railway authority trained for many years to study economy, expedition, and cheap carriage under the pressure of competition and the shareholders' desire of dividends, might be able to make valuable suggestions as regards the working of railways in India." Neither the financial policy nor the administration of some of our English railways have gratified the shareholders' desire of dividends nor the travellers' desire of ordinary comforts.

The mighty calamity which has recently afflicted extensive and populous provinces of our Indian empire has justified the wisdom of the Government of

Lord Lytton, who stated in the most precise terms that in the increase of railways and canals, but especially of railways, lay the only means open to Government of meeting the attacks of famine on more favourable conditions. By the construction of railways and works of irrigation the recurrence of that periodic and inevitable scourge may be rendered less frequent, but it is impossible for the Government to place every province of the empire in a position of absolute safety. One of the most valuable results that may be anticipated from the labours of the Irrigation Commission will be to authoritatively decide what new irrigation works can be constructed as a protection against famine without the charge for interest and maintenance imposing too great a financial burden on the State for that protection. Lord George Hamilton, in his speech on the Indian Budget, said: "Putting for a moment on one side the misery, the privation, and the mortality inflicted upon humanity alone by this awful visitation, the property lost to the agricultural community in Western India is estimated to be not less than £50,000,000 sterling."

The mortality due to famine and the diseases which follow in its train is stated by the Commissioners appointed to report on the recent famine to have been about one million and a quarter. The Commissioners indicate that in their opinion better administration might have in certain districts diminished the mortality. This is a

matter for thorough inquiry. To feed and succour millions of human creatures is, however, no light and easy thing, and it is hopeless for any Government to attempt the task of preventing all suffering. It is impossible to get the professional beggar to leave his native village for the work, and it is difficult to persuade the old, the infirm, and the proud to take advantage of the aid which the State offers them. From Rajputana comes an old-world tale of a Rajput chief dwelling in his bare house among his destitute tenants, who distributed among the latter the grain allotted to his village, but refused any for himself—"I am a Rahtor, I could not take charity"—and who with difficulty was induced to accept a loan.

As in war, so in the plan of campaign against famine, errors are bound to be made; but the slightest breath of criticism has not been raised as to the conduct of the soldiers on whom falls the brunt of the battle. The strenuous labour and humane self-sacrifice which a famine campaign demands from the executive have never, in fact, been sufficiently appreciated. The Viceroy, when reviewing the course of the recent famine, paid the noble army of workers a just and eloquent tribute.

"Numerous instances of devotion," he told the Legislative Council, "amounting to the loftiest heroism, have been brought under my notice. I have heard of Englishmen dying at their post without a murmur. I have seen cases where the entire organisation of a vast area and the

lives of thousands of beings rested upon the shoulders of a single individual, labouring on in silence and solitude, whilst his bodily strength was fast ebbing away. I have known of natives who, inspired by this example, have thrown themselves with equal ardour into the struggle, and have uncomplainingly laid down their lives for their countrymen. Particularly must I mention the noble efforts of the missionary agencies of various Christian denominations. If ever there was an occasion on which their local knowledge and influence were likely to be of value, and on which it was open to them to vindicate the highest standards of their beneficent calling, it was here; and strenuously and faithfully have they performed the task."

Though extensive provinces have been laid waste by the scourge of famine, the figures in the Blue-Book bear testimony to the growing trade and wealth of the vast and varied continent. The question "What the Indies do vent" is as important to us as it was to those merchant adventurers who formed the East India Company in the spacious days of Queen Elizabeth. Old Richard Hakluyt made lists of the products of the Indies for them, and of the places where "sondry sorte of spices do growe, gathered out of sondry the best and latest authours," and with this information their ships were sent forth on their hazardous ventures. The modern compiler no longer makes lists merely of "sundry sortes of spices," but of cotton, opium, jute, indigo, tea, coffee, pulses, and cereals. The total yield of cotton in 1899-1900 was over two millions of bales. The quantity of jute exported in

1828 was 364 cwts., worth £62: the quantity exported in 1899-1900 was 9,725,000 cwts., valued at £9,557,000. The creation of an industry to a value of nearly ten millions in seventy years indicates what may yet be expected from the resources of India. The tea industry, like the jute industry, is entirely due to British brain, British capital, and British pluck. In ten years the exports of Indian tea have risen from 80 million to 180 million lb. Their value in 1899-1900 was over six millions sterling. The tea-gardens during the year employed 654,000 labourers, and as long as the industry is conducted upon sound commercial principles, and by the freewill and to the mutual benefit of all concerned, it is a source of national wealth deserving of every encouragement by the State.

It is, however, not on her agriculture alone, though it is the most important industry in the land, that the material prosperity of India depends: her mineral resources are also great. The total output of all her coal-mines has risen in ten years from 2 million tons to 5 million. About $1\frac{1}{2}$ million tons were used on the Indian railways, and about 300,000 tons were exported. The remarkable increase in the output of the Indian coal-mines must, by giving them cheaper coal, have a beneficial effect on every Indian manufacturing industry in which steam is employed, and by decreasing largely the cost of transport

by rail and steamer, greatly develop the whole of the foreign and much of the internal trade of the country. "The iron ore produced in India in 1899," the report states, "amounted to 60,700 tons, a larger figure than that of any previous year, but insignificant in comparison with the future possibilities of this industry."

The iron-smelting establishments are bound to increase with the increase of coal-mines. If coal were discovered in Madras, that Presidency, on account of her iron-ore, might become the richest province in the empire. The out-turn of the gold-mines in Mysore increased from 321,878 ounces in 1896 to 448,071 ounces, and the day is not far distant when fresh discoveries of gold will materially increase the wealth of India. The time, we also trust, is nigh when a serious and scientific attempt will be made to work again the diamond resources of the land. India is the oldest, and was for long the only, source of these gems, and though larger diamonds have of recent years been found in other quarters of the globe, the Indian diamond has never been surpassed in purity and colour. It is the precious stone which has made Golconda a household word in Europe, but no diamonds were found there. It was a fortress in which the diamonds were cut and stored. The mines were about 150 miles from Hyderabad. At Cuddapah, Kurnool, and Ellore near the Krishna, all in the Madras

Presidency, were the chief mines, at which some of the largest diamonds have been found. The native diamond-seeker sinks a pit a few feet deep, and searches the bed which he thinks most promising. This is the primitive style, which has not varied for centuries. Conducted on no regular plan, it has afforded only a pittance. But conducted on a scientific plan with the newest machinery, by trained men, it should become, as in South Africa, a regular branch of industry to a large population.

Measures for improving the revenue administration, and means for directly developing the resources of the continent, will not advance the security and contentment of the people unless they are strengthened by corresponding measures for the improvement of the administration of justice. As in our revenue administration, so in our judicial administration, the chief defect is want of elasticity. The state of society and civilisation which pervades the millions of India calls for a simple, cheap, and expeditious administration of justice. We have introduced a system which is neither simple, cheap, nor expeditious. It has the cardinal defects of the English judicial system from which it was taken. They are: (1) The great delay that attends the trials of original suits; (2) the want of certainty and finality to which the decisions of such suits are subject. These evils are due to the constitution of the courts, the system of trying suits pre-

vailing in these courts, and the numerous appeals to which unsuccessful litigants can have recourse.

The judges of civil courts of first instance are now almost everywhere natives of India, but the method of recruiting them is far from satisfactory. The qualifications for an appointment in the judicial service are, firstly, the possession of the Bachelor of Law degree, and, secondly, practice (generally nominal). The first experiment made of their legal knowledge and judicial talents is to appoint them judges. The result is that courts of first instance are presided over by young men who have a small knowledge of law, and little sympathy or acquaintance with the people. Almost all the decisions from the original courts are open to a first appeal on both facts and law to the court of the district judge, and to a second appeal, theoretically only on the law, to the high court. In cases over Rs. 10,000 (about £630), there is a third appeal to the Privy Council. This system of appeals has produced a body of pleaders who, with cunning rather than with skill, exercise a sordid and pernicious trade. Gibbon's description of the advocates in the decline of Roman jurisprudence is applicable to the Indian *vakel* (pleader):—

“Some of them procured admittance into families for the purpose of fomenting differences, of encouraging suits, and of preparing a harvest of gain for themselves or their brethren. The splendid and popular class was composed of the advocates who filled the Forum (High Court)

with the sound of their turgid and loquacious rhetoric. Careless of fame and of justice, they are described for the most part as ignorant and rapacious guides, who conducted their clients through a maze of expense, of delay, and of disappointment; from whence, after a tedious series of years, they were at length dismissed, when their patience and forbearance were almost exhausted.”

To protect a simple, humble, patient, and industrious but cunning people fond of litigation from these ignorant and rapacious guides is no easy task. Some improvement may, however, be effected by vesting specially selected native officers with summary powers. The first appellate court, that of the district judge, is as a rule presided over by a civilian judge who is well acquainted with the people and their vernacular, and the appeal to his court is quickly settled. But the civilian judge has never had the advantage of a severe and wide study of the law, and is lacking in that professional training which can be acquired only by practice at the bar. One of the ablest civilian judges that ever sat on the bench of an Indian high court proposed some years ago that before a civilian was raised to the district bench he should for two years be the government pleader in a district court. In theory, as we have stated, the appeal from the district court to the high court lies on the law of the case. But through the pertinacity and ingenuity of the advocates and pleaders, and the mistaken leniency of some of the judges

of the high courts, a very large number of second appeals are admitted in which there is no point of law at all, and in which really only questions of facts arise. The evil can be remedied only by having stronger high courts, the judges of which consist partly of civilians, partly of barristers selected either from the Indian or the English bar, and partly of natives taken from the native barristers and pleaders. These judges are appointed by the Crown during good behaviour, or, under rules recently framed, till they are sixty. Owing to the decrease in the emoluments of the office from £5000 to £3000, it is not easy to get the best civilians to enter the judicial branch of the service, or persuade an English barrister with a moderate practice at home to desert it for an Indian judgeship. Social and political influence plays too important a part in the home selections. The most successful appointment made of recent years was due to the Secretary of State asking the judges at home to name three men. This precedent might be followed with advantage. The barrister judge from home is deficient in knowledge of Indian law and of the language and character of the people, and for some time he is at the mercy of the native pleader. The civilian judge knows the vernacular, the people, and Indian law, but, as we have stated, he has not had the advantage of the experience of real business at the bar. He is, however, a

better judge for the parties than for the lawyers. The native judge is well versed in Indian law, but he is better able to invent ingenious suggestions and out-of-the-way arguments than give a lucid exposition of substantial reasons. An eminent jurist has declared that there is no more subtle mind than that of the educated Bengali, and a partial and unreal education which trains men to dispute about readings and not to read has developed and fostered the fatal tendency to ingenuities and refinements.

With regard to their educational system, the Government of India have made, as Lord Curzon pointed out in a recent wise and weighty speech on education, the same mistake they have made in so many other branches of legislation—"a too slavish imitation of English models." They also committed the grave error of originally not starting with some definite plan. The Indian educational system has been tinkered by Indian administrators as our army and navy have been tinkered by English statesmen. The superiority of Germans in educational matters is due not solely to the efficiency of the institutions, but to the careful manner in which every branch of the educational system is adjusted to the whole and to the wants of the people. The German educational system was first carefully planned by able rulers and statesmen, and the noble fabric was then erected by wise and patient labour.

From the Volksschule, where the child of the people learns to read, to the university, it is one harmonious structure.

In India education has been a tentative experiment and a spasmodic effort of fretful activity. If it is to have any influence in moulding the mind of the people, it must be carried out on a definite plan for a long series of years. In every province of the empire a complete system of education must be established, with all its parts adjusted one to the other. And with the Supreme Government there must be a Director-General of Education, an expert and an enthusiast "who," to use the words of the Viceroy, "will prevent the Government of India from going wrong, and who will help us to secure that community of principle and of aim without which we go drifting along like a deserted hulk in chopping seas." But it is not easy to find a Von Altenstein. There must be in every hamlet the Volksschule, where the child of the people learns to read and write in his own mother-tongue. Regarding the teaching of the masses, Lord Curzon rightly considers that the Government has not fully fulfilled its duty.

"One of the first claims upon its bounty that the Government would do well to acknowledge would be the education of the masses. It could not be said to be the right thing that three out of every four country villages should be still without a school, and that not much more than 3,000,000 boys, or less than one-fifth of the total boys of school-going age, should be in receipt of primary education."

Better means must also be adopted for encouraging the growth of vernacular literature, for if India is ever to have a literature worthy of a great intellectual nation it must be in the vernacular—the produce of the native mind fertilised by European thought. From the day a boy enters a gymnasium in Germany to the day he leaves he is thoroughly instructed in his mother-tongue. At present there is little need for the multiplication of secondary schools or of colleges affiliated to the universities, but there is great need for their teaching being raised and widened. Access from the secondary school to the colleges should be made more easy to ability, but more difficult to those who are not able to avail themselves of a good secondary education. What Mr Morley said of Scotland is as true of India: "To give access to university education to those who did not come to the preliminary examination sufficiently ripe from the secondary schools was to do no good to the student, the parent, and the universities." In India it has produced a large body of half-educated men, whose personal disappointment bursts into enmity against the Government. By raising the culture of our Indian colleges, by closer intercourse between professors and students, by supplying the discipline which alone can regulate the higher aspirations common to our humanity, we must endeavour to create intellectual leaders who will spread among their countrymen an imperial spirit

which shall make them proud of being an important part of that wide and splendid imperial system whose influence extends to every part of the globe. By the wise policy adopted towards the feudatory chiefs on the transfer of India to the Crown, by the personal interest her late gracious Majesty took in their welfare, by the courtesy and sympathy shown to them by her sons, an imperial spirit has been developed among the princes of India, and explains their aspirations to incorporate themselves more actively in the defence of the empire. The imperial spirit has also spread among our native soldiers, who, by service abroad, have been able to test the power of England, and to contrast and prove the sterling qualities of their comrade the British soldier. The links which bind India to England are growing, and by

sympathy, justice, and the spread of a sound education must continue to grow.

In the present imperfect summary we have noted some of the flaws in our administration, but, as John Stuart Mill said, few governments, even under far more favourable circumstances, have attempted so much for the good of their subjects or carried so many of their attempts to a successful and beneficial issue.

"A governing of foreigners, over a people most difficult to be understood and still more difficult to be improved; a Government which has had all its knowledge to acquire, by a slow process of study and experience, and often by a succession of failures (generally, however, leading to ultimate success), has a right to take pride to itself for having accomplished so much; and most certainly cannot be justly reproached by any existing Government or people with not having effected more."

THE CONQUEST OF CHARLOTTE.¹PART II.—THE HAPPY ISLANDS—*continued*.

CHAPTER XIII.—COCKED-HAT NICHOLSON'S BOAT.

THE wind had risen to half a gale and ranged throatily round the coast. The afternoon was falling stone-grey. The wood-sawyers left the yard, still bickering, Tam pursuing Robin in futile little rushes to which the impish lad invited him. Rab and Dirk Dunlop watched their departure from the window, and then made to go down to the workshop. With my head in a swirl I descended the ladder on my side of the loft, and dived into the dark tunnel by which I had crept from the gate. Just within the mouth of it stood the younger Charlotte.

Even in that pitch dark (to me, coming from the glimmer of light) I knew her; and I was filled with a sudden sense of loss because she had not stood by my side in the loft, and heard all that I had heard.

"Oh! why do you only come here now?" I cried.

"Why do you come here at all, David Shirra?" she answered.

"Hush!" I said, recollecting where we were, and put out my hand to stop her; but now, in the deep shadow, the feeling which I had when I saw her going up Dishington's an hour earlier, new and discon-

certainly piercing, held me back from touching her.

"Charlotte," I said—I spoke in a whisper—"Charlotte, do you know—do you know——"

When I sought to give it form in words, my discovery seemed only vapour.

"You heard what they said—you have been listening," she cried. She spoke in lower tones, and, my sight now accustomed to the gloom, I could see the glow in her eyes and cheeks.

"Do you know them, then?" I asked wonderingly. "Who are they? What does it mean?"

"Sneak!" she cried in girlish petulance.

"I am no sneak, Charlotte Cook," I said angrily. And yet, somehow, to suffer that taunt from her seemed only in accord with that new and searching emotion which the presence and very sight of her filled me with. I found myself feeling lifted within myself into a new authority, facing with more pride of equality the whole world—save Charlotte; and even to her I spoke more like a man.

"I came here," I said, "to seek you. My father has come for me—to be a lawyer in Uncle Michael's office at Town

¹ Copyright, 1901, by Dodd, Mead, & Co., in the United States of America.

of Tarvit, . . . and I wanted to say good-bye."

Charlotte spoke no word.

"Let us go back to the gate: if you know a shorter road than the way through the sheds I crawled here by, show it me. Then I'll tell you—I'll tell you all I can."

"Through the sheds is the only way," she answered, and turned and went on in front of me; but she led me by an easy road through all this lumber and *débris*.

She brought me to the gateway, just hanging back within the shelter of the shed beside it.

"Here is the door: I'll let you out." She ordered me forth, with a wave of her arm, as if in her action she would disdain the note of inquiry in her speech.

"Do you believe me, Charlotte?" I said. "I wouldn't have been here, save to say 'good-bye' to you. I followed you up Dishington's Wynd, and when I came in you were gone, and I went through the shed to look for you. It's true!"

On her cheek next the light I could see the blood rippling up. Outside the yard, in the wynd, there was a tramp of feet that ceased suddenly on a command in a voice I recognised. Colonel David Cook was halting his men near the gate.

"It's Dave; you must go out," Charlotte cried. But I held her arm—I held both her arms. She threw me off hotly, and then with a sudden frank impulse held out her hand to me.

"I believe you," she said.

The next thing I knew was

that we were in the open doorway, and that Colonel Dave was coming to us with his claymore drawn. With another sudden impulse Charlotte stepped in front of me.

"You cannot bring your men in here," she said with a grave face, but defiance and a twinkle in her eye for Dave.

How these two understood each other!

"I would march them into the sanctuary," he answered, "if duty called me. I flogged Harry Turbayne half an hour ago on parade for deserting, and *this* man will hang for it."

His face was as grave as hers, but he met her hidden laugh with another. It is strange: there was a bit of Rab in every one of that family.

"Stand back, woman!" he cried. "Sergeant, there is your man!"

Ere I knew what was happening, I was in the grasp of a lanky ragamuffin, one Archie Coyle, who lived in the Torrie road.

"To the harbour: March!" cries Dave, and the company moved off with me as a prisoner.

It was then that I suddenly remembered my errand to Mr Stein in the Excise.

"Dave!" I shouted, "you maun let me go. I have a message that maun be delivered."

I struggled with Sergeant Coyle.

"Let me get my letter," I said to him, so imperatively that he loosed his hold on my arm. I felt everywhere in my pockets for the letter. It was gone.

"Dave!" I called again.
"Dave!"

"Halt!" commanded the colonel. I saw Provost Turbayne, a rubicund, round, pompous man, come bustling up the wynd, and Dave going out to meet him.

At my second shout he turned, and seeing the commotion in the ranks, where I was struggling to break through them, he ran back.

"What does the fellow want?" he cries: and I—

"Dave!"

"Silence!" he roared.

"I tell you, Dave Cook," I said, "this is no joke. This is no joke . . . I'm telling you. I'm away from the school now, and am one of your sodgers no longer. I have a message to deliver, and you'll better not hinder me."

"Sergeant Coyle," cries Dave, turning on his heel, "I make you responsible for your prisoner with your head."

Provost Turbayne had followed him, boiling with anger.

"You young se-se-scoundrel!" he spluttered; "what have you do-do-done with our Herry?"

"Your Herry?" answered Dave, calmly looking him up and down. "I haven't seen your Herry since parade."

Charlotte had crept up to within a step or two of them; her face was beaming with glee. In my despair a sudden thought struck me.

"Charlotte!" I called to her.
"Charlotte!"

She waited a moment to hear the bickering between the Provost and the colonel, and reluctantly came to me; and

because she was the colonel's sister, the stupid Coyle imagined that he might not refuse her speech with me.

"Charlotte! I've lost a letter. . . . Dropped it, . . . you know, . . . up in the loft . . . yonder . . ."

"Hush," she said.

"It's important. It must be delivered. . . . It *must*," I cried.

"Oh! I'll find it. I'll deliver it," she said, to quieten me, and ran back to laugh at the Provost.

He went off blustering down the wynd, turning at every third step to shake a fist at us and threaten the power of a chief magistrate. Dave was back in front of his men, and Coyle, seizing me by the nape of the neck, urged me forward with his knee.

"You'll remember," I cried to Charlotte over my back which was involuntarily bent towards her.

"Huts! Yes, I'll remember," she answered, scarce looking at me; and she watched us down the wynd with a broad laugh.

Dave marched us along the hill to avoid the Saturday traffic of the High Street. We crossed it at the harbour. At the sight of the farmers' carts bumping homewards, the thought of my father fuming at Aunt Sarah's over my delay assailed me. I made an attempt to break away, but Coyle held me fast, and his knee, a bony knee, worked like a piston. Through the tap-room window of the "Sir Andrew Wood," as we passed, I caught a glimpse of Robin and Tam. Robin was

paying his lawing for his afternoon's sport. A natural, disengaging himself from the loafers at the inn door, followed in our wake, playing us a step on an imaginary life.

We were out upon the pier now, fair in the face of the wind which drenched us with the drift of the waves breaking against the sea-wall. Cocked-hat Nicholson's boat was bumping about at the foot of the stairs, and Dave running down to it returned with a coil of rope. He marched us up below one of the harbour lamps, fixed by an iron stanchion to the mason-work, and ordered Coyle to fall back. Coyle released me with a parting benediction.

"Three minutes to say your prayers!" cries Dave, with a little signal to his men to turn their faces away from me at my devotions,—a delicate attention. It maddened me. Sore, still rubbing the sore, I turned on him fiercely.

"Enough of this nonsense, Dave Cook," I cried. I sought to impress him with my exalted condition. No longer one of Foster's . . . a man . . . entered at the Law. I threatened him with my father's wrath, Michael Trail's, Provost Turbayne's. He cut in upon my ridiculous rigmarole.

"Up with him! The renegade maun die unshriven."

He climbed the stanchion, and took two half hitches with the rope round the projecting arms. Dropping to the ground on the rope, in make-believe to test its strength, he made a running noose, drawing the bight briskly through his palms to reduce the

friction. There was a half-inch plank belonging to the inn which Dave had impressed on the way down. This was laid along the narrow bevelled ledge of the masonry, and I was lifted on to it, fighting desperately. The noose now round my neck caught in the lapel of my coat.

"Botchers!" cried Dave. "Wha ever heard of a man being hanged with his collar on!"

Coyle, sprawling on the top of the wall now, wrenched off my collar, and the noose with a little slip tightened on my gullet.

"Gie'm a long drop, Airchie!" cried the natural, rubbing his hands in glee.

A sudden horrible fear seized me, and I clutched wildly at the rope. At the same moment Dave gave the word to stand clear before striking away the plank. It was the last sound I remember. In my struggle my iron-tipped heels slipped off the weather-beaten ledge, and there I was hanging, being slowly strangled into unconsciousness.

Aunt Charlotte was at her high overlooking window with Rab's spy-glass pointed out to sea. From the street below rolled up the roar of the busy, bustling town,—the homely, jocund, scrambling world of St Brise, to which her life was bound by tyrannous and beneficent fetters of love and necessity, where she knew all and was known of all, where Rab and she had a place (though discredited, a place), possessing which no heart is ever a pariah, the nest for which her children, however far they, might fare,

would never lose the homing desire. . . . There was Robin down at the harbour beside Tam Cornfoot, with the half swing, half stoop of the shoulders, a sailor to be, destined it seemed certain to navigate the world, — and the port of St Brise would always be for Robin the end of his voyage. . . . Aunt Charlotte was standing at her window, looking over it all, ranging the Firth mouth with her glass. Always looking for her ship to come home, “a ship of a flee-away, phantom kind,” her husband said; but looking, as he, the rascal, knew, for his ship as well, riding deep in the waist, like that one she had seen this morning on the horizon now blotted out by the sea-mist driven in by the wind. . . .

She caught sight of Dave marching his men down the pier, and followed him with an affectionate, laughing eye. She could enter into the spirit of his sport. In her blood still was the happy lift that twenty years before had carried her truant steps to the shore at the sight of an outward-bound barque. Had it not been for that rascally pirate always hovering near, might not her own ship have come home to her in St Brise, laden with her own restlessness transmuted to a rich content! Perhaps: I cannot say. The best to happen to us cannot be better than that we hope for; and I will not say she would have wished it so. She was a woman of unquenchable spirit and interest in life; it was at this point that Rab's nature and hers touched. She

was watching Dave now with an undivided heart, laughingly, in broad and sympathetic enjoyment of his make-believe. Indeed, his colonel was a diverting rôle that might have tickled a less sensitive humour than hers, and my part of renegade matched nature in its desperate earnestness. It was desperate earnestness with me, at any rate, when my heels slipped off the ledge, and the rope tightened on my throat. So she realised. Only the natural remained watching me: he was huddled against the wall, collapsed in savage excitement. Dave and the others had fled in a sudden panic of fright. She rapped on the window-pane, as if to arrest them; then running into the kitchen picked up a carving-knife which she hid in a fold of her bodice as she rushed downstairs and across the street.

A man on a horse coming out of the stables of the “Sir Andrew Wood” at a swinging trot almost rode her down as she turned into the harbour, and she was down the pier out of hearing of his oath before he could fling it at her. People turned to look at the flying woman; and a cry which got up, that some one was in the basin, emptied the street of all who could run to the harbour-head, where some silly man stood rooted, waving a frantic hand towards me, and shouting that the idiot was hanging a laddie. When Aunt Charlotte reached me a lamp-lighter on his ladder was fumbling helplessly with the rope

at my neck, and she cut me down.

When I came to myself I was lying in young Charlotte's bed. It stood in a little room giving off the kitchen, and taking its only light from it by a pane of glass high up in the partition wall; but the door was open, discovering in the mellow mixed light of the fire and the sinking day the well-known hearth, which soothed my disordered senses with its familiarity and warmth. Aunt Charlotte was at my bedside, and with her the doctor, but him I did not recognise, though conscious before dropping off again of a sweet, pungent odour from his presence that seemed to chime with the ruddy-grey warmth of the kitchen.

It appears he was only awaiting this short spell of consciousness to declare me free from immediate danger. It was sleep, not unconsciousness, that I had fallen into now. So he explained. There was probably nothing more than shock the matter with me, he said—shock and the congestion of the blood-vessels. He would send a liniment for the bruised neck. These young vagabonds! Well, Mr Shirra's son evidently wasn't to die on the gallows! Ha! ha! Keep him quiet, though: he has been drenched, and there may be a touch of fever. These imps of mischief! And her son the ringleader! Eh? Well, like . . . He tripped awkwardly upon the likeness in mischief of father and son, and saved himself with the tag that boys will be boys. Aunt Charlotte, relieved by his

favourable verdict, fell back on the ludicrous side of the accident, which she pictured with gusto, and, in tears herself, sped him laughing down the stairs.

She was still shaken between tears and laughter when there came a loud knocking at the door. She composed herself to open it, thinking this must be Aunt Sarah, to whom a messenger had been sent flying; but, instead, it was young Charlotte who pushed in, breathless.

She would have passed into the kitchen, but her mother turned her into the front room, on the sea. The girl was breathing hard, waiting painfully for her voice. She had heard of the hanging, her mother supposed, and sought to reassure her. "There is nothing to fear," she said. "He is safe." The girl's eyes asked, who? in amazement. "David Shirra. He is sleeping in the kitchen there, on your own bed. Sleeping." She pictured the scene again for the girl, beginning at the end with the doctor's assurance and running back over the alarming steps, with a ludicrous touch for each. The girl listened, unheeding, until her voice came to her, and then she broke in with her own story. "She had met David Shirra in the woodyard. Dave had caught him there and marched him off. . . . And there was a letter. . . . David Shirra was marched off before he could find it. . . . She had promised him to look for it and deliver it. She found it. She delivered it. She had promised. . . . It was to Mr Stein, in the Excise.

She had promised, and she delivered it."

Aunt Charlotte went white to the lips, but she kept her voice.

"Well?" she asked. "Well?"

"Well," the girl repeated, and was silent. She did not know how to tell what she feared, what she knew. She fingered her belt for a minute, silent, choosing her words for the telling of her story. She was face to face with the knowledge, the shadow of which was the shadow on her grey eyes. She and her mother were face to face with it, and she sought some way of escape for them, so that they need not meet, mind to mind, in the face of it. So she was silent, choosing her words; and her mother waited, a sickening fear clutching at her heart. A letter to Mr Shirra—that was relevant enough. There was danger in that, a danger to be warded off. What was that floating in her mind? Let her think! Brass buttons . . . yes . . . on that man on the horse as she flashed past him over at the inn. Hey! In that case the Coast-guard were as good as warned. . . . If only she knew more of what the girl had to tell. . . . Why did not the girl speak?

Behind this danger rose the horrible fear. Did the girl understand the danger? Had they—not Robin only: he was a man, deep in his father's confidence—but the others, her children, Charlotte even—had they too learned the furtive secret of Rab's waist-deep ship? That stabbed her pride; and then, overmastering the pain of that wound, there sprang up in

her a fierce jealousy for Rab in the hearts of her children, who could not have known him, not loving him, as she did.

She must learn the truth.

"What said Mr Stein?" she asked, so commandingly that Charlotte ran on with her story afresh.

"He came running after me with the letter open in his hand. He asked me how I came by it. I told him Dave Shirra gave it me to deliver. He inquired of me about Mr Shirra—Mr Shirra is down in the town to-day David told me that."

"Yes."

"I saw father."

"Where?"

"In the woodyard. They were still there."

"They?"

"Father and another man—a stranger."

"Yes, yes."

"Father's away to Torrie. I was to tell you. Particularly. He's off to Torrie. And the stranger—he is downstairs, in the yard, waiting. It's near dark there. I brought him along the hill, and in by the back gate. Father told me to, and to tell you. And we are to find Robin, and this man and he—he knows what must be done. . . . They——"

She was stopped by a sound of feet and voices on the stair.

"Miss Trail . . . and Mr Shirra, no doubt," said Aunt Charlotte.

"Well?" she cried impatiently, as there was a loud rapping on the house door. "Well?"

"That's all. Oh! mother."

With averted eyes, but with

a world of affection and sympathy in her voice and action, the girl threw herself into her mother's arms. For a moment Aunt Charlotte swayed in response. So we think; for now Charlotte and I can bear to search her mother's heart in memory, with reverence, for its great passion. The next moment that passion reasserted itself; burning up the more fiercely because of the fuel the girl was throwing upon it. They pitied her—her children! Not only knew what she knew and feared, but knew she knew and feared it, and were in a conspiracy of silence and pity, to shield her, seeking to shelter her behind the ill, and the ill-repute, of Rab, their father, her husband, the man she loved! Just because she was a woman of such divining sympathy, so swift to imagine and attach her children's mood and subtle impulses, now she was jealous for Rab in their hearts. . . . There was the knocking repeated on the front door. Miss Trail stood on the other side of it—that censorious woman! Yet she at least condemned Rab and her together. What was intolerable to her now was acquittal gained at his expense. Her neighbours acquitted her because of him. Her children did. It was unjust. If she had a doubt that day in the bailie's court twenty years ago, had she not banished it deliberately? And throughout these years, when doubt had become a certainty, was it not open-eyed that she had kept her place at his side, lived with him, at bed and board, become the mother

of his children, shared his confidence—yes, she would persuade herself of that, shared his innermost heart. And she would do it all over again. In the flaming of her great love she saw lit up the divided duty of these years, and was justified in the choice she had made. If ever she had looked back on the road she had come with regret, if ever she had dreamed of her ship coming home with content, she thought of it now only as a reproach to her. She would no longer shelter behind Rab's ill-doing; she would discover her share in it! There was pride as well as love in that perhaps. Her pride no longer fought her love, but joined with it to drive her on under an overmastering purpose. Following the agitation which my hanging escapade and the news of Mr Stein's letter had caused her, this revelation of her children's pity overbalanced her emotions. Rab was in danger: her place was at his side. This kept beating in her head—a kind of noble madness. Before all the town, she would take her place at his side.

Suddenly tranquil and radiant in her great resolve of abnegation, she kissed the head bent on her shoulder, and disentangled herself from the girl's embrace.

"Now, let these folk in. Take them in beside David," she cried. "I know your father's plan: I'll see to it."

At the words the girl looked up astonished out of her distress. There was something in them, encountering which

her sensitive nature was thrown back, stunned; something inexplicable, something at the same time strong and true. The truth in her mother's words was like a naked flame.

The only thought in Aunt Charlotte's mind now was that the time was flying in which she must convert her purpose into action.

"Go. Go quickly," she cried, striking her hands together in her impatience; and at this note in her voice compelling obedience, the girl opened the door, while her mother withdrew into the dark of the passage. Aunt Sarah was in a shrill agitation, all tears and temper. My father, in stolid gloom and anxiety, listened to her outcries without a word. They followed young Charlotte into the kitchen, and her mother passing swiftly through the lobby ran down the stairs.

What happened next is surmise only. Charlotte and I have woven a story out of the strands of our later knowledge. Dirk Dunlop would be hanging back in the shadow of the garden-wall, as the girl had left him. There Aunt Charlotte found him. Fate was making sport of these two, bringing them together as strangers now. Neither could guess the other's identity. To each, the other was only an element in a danger from which escape was to be sought. Unless by some instinct at the supreme moment they discovered it, they could not know the kindred blood that ran in their veins.

Aunt Charlotte must have brought Dirk out by the garden-

gate and along the hill. Some one, it appears, saw them cross the High Street at the narrow dark point beyond the harbour. Robin was one of a group of lads and lasses daffing at the sheltered gable of the "Sir Andrew Wood." She knew where to find him,—her passionate steps led her true, and she signalled him forth. A minute or two later half a dozen sailor men, conscious of a movement in the basin by some animal and elemental instinct, like an animal when a strange foot nears its lair, emerged silent from doorways round the harbour, and watched the woman and the two men sail out in Cocked-hat Nicholson's boat.

Mr Foster was walking home along by Torrie Town. He, too, had his Saturday, when like us shore-rovers, detaching himself from the week's round, he lived in a cloud-world of his own imagining. There he breathed a finer intellectual air, and laid up stores of moral energy for the driving of his imperfect mill of men. When he dropped from it to earth again, he was still charged with a rarefied temper, and made little futile efforts to rise, like a bird with a wounded wing. His intimates in the town, not understanding the secret of his exaltation, nor perceiving how remote from them he was, saw only the added touch of the grandiose in his address, the greater high-steppiness of his speech, and smiled at what they called his "week-end manner."

He had reached the junction

of the shore and the landward roads to St Brise. The wind had fallen with the sun, but still drove angry spray-laden blasts along the coast. As he stood in unconscious debate whether to brave it or seek the sheltered highway, he was aware of a figure down among the rocks to the east of him. He recognised it as Rab Cuick, heedlessly, with a mind far above a tailor; yet some tension in the figure straining seawards caused him to turn with it and look. God! His mind came fluttering down lumpishly, like a sail when the halyards are slackened away. That was a boat out there! He knew nothing about boats, but the distress of this one was clamant. It was a brown speck fighting helplessly against the heaving grey of sea and sky that threatened to engulf it. He cleared the spray from his eyes, and he made a kind of physical endeavour to clear the dreams out of his mind, to fix them on the boat. Even as he looked again it was swallowed up. Instinctively he turned to the figure on the rocks beyond him to share with him the shock of that sight.

He saw Rab climbing over the rocks. To his amazement he saw him strike inland among the trees and disappear. He ran a step or two after him, crying his name aloud, the wind catching the sounds and scattering them. Then he stopped, in angry helplessness. He had come to earth with a crash, dashed against terrible physical realities. His helplessness was intolerable. A

moment before his had been the faith that could remove mountains. Now, powerless, he was calling for any human companionship in the knowledge of disaster. He stopped with his hand still raised in consort with his voice after Rab. And then some sudden, swift, divining doubt filled him of the figure stealing away among the trees.

He turned into the landward road, and made all speed for St Brise. News of an accident met him outside the town. The farmers driving out from market were scattering it from their gigs, like seed with both hands. At one place he heard it told that the whole Cook family had gone down in Cocked-hat Nicholson's boat. "Perished" was the word the speaker used, and he kept reiterating it: "all perr-ished, all perr-ished." Mr Foster, seeing again that figure stealing among the trees, set him right about Rab's safety at any rate, and found himself the centre of a gaping crowd, like a common gossip who can say, "I'll tell you: I was there, and saw't happen." The little gentleman drew off in a nice disgust, and hastened on his way with his mouth closed.

Within the narrow entrance to St Brise, the clamour of the High Street assailed him: the crack of wheels on the causeway, and the complaining echo of it among the pendent house-fronts, the Saturday-night cries, the tramp-tramp on the pavement, the irregular rhythm and strident note of it all

clanging with rise and fall through the closes. The involved cross-streams of traffickers made ceaseless flicker in the transverse glare of the windows, through which burghers in shirt-sleeves could be seen hopping about behind their counters, with the air of busy birds building their nests. Women, marketing in a penurious agitation, their arms full of brown-paper bags and parcels, bustled into one another in the doorways. The shop-boys, with tucked up aprons, loaded the barrows at the gutter, or skidded after the urchins who jinked one another round the wheels. Working-men, slack-kneed, with clean shiny faces, gathered in groups in the street or daundered along it in week-end relaxation. Lads and lasses, passing in two's and three's, hung back upon arrested steps to fling a sally over their shoulders. At Robbie Sand's confection-shop the bell behind the door made its rasping "ping-ping" unceasingly, as the customers trooped in for hot pies for the evening meal. One woman, as Mr Foster passed, gawsily sniffing the seasoned fragrance steaming from her basket, hung upon the step to exchange a last word on this "lamentable business." A loathing of this woman possessed him—a physical repulsion from these gaping nostrils. He stepped from the pavement on to the street, with his hand raised towards her, as if in deprecation.

The town was going on in its

comfortable, customary Saturday-night way, notwithstanding that its voice ran all upon the boat swamped at Torrie.

Mr Foster heard the news as he came through it—heard it in a hundred variants, indeed. The true story was tossed on a sea of rumour, like the boat he had seen swallowed up in the bay. But some elements of the story were constant in all mouths. Mrs Cook and her boy Robin were drowned,—they and a stranger. All tongues wagged round the stranger: a sailor of course, a foreign sailor, a smuggler. That was his ship beyond a doubt that had skirted the Firth mouth all day. But what was the woman doing in the boat? It was a smuggling business: Rab's record made it easy for them to determine that. But what was the woman doing in it? And had any one seen Rab, by the way? Where was that gentleman hiding? Mr Foster heard, and kept his lips closed. The recollection of the gaping crowd that had gathered round him outside St Brise, when it was known that he had witnessed the accident, kept his lips closed. His office brought him wonderfully in contact with this causeway world, and each morning he put his hand to the rough work of it which fell to his share, cunningly and conscientiously, but in a defensive, ironic temper which sent him home uncontaminated at the end of the day. He was not averse from the pleasures of life,—good wines, a good table, the company of his fellow-

men, the elegancies and the pleasures of life; but he sought them in a few families of his own standing in the town. He sought them where a gentleman ought, as a matter of course. It did not occur to him to seek them elsewhere. He did not find them in great measure anywhere in St Brise, indeed; but that also he took as matter of course. Among the things that Mr Foster taught us was that superior persons need not be prigs. If a man must go out in foul weather, better the dirty pavement than the dirtier causey: Mr Foster's social consciousness was no more fastidious, and no less assured, than that.

He kept his lips closed as he came through the town: he was Mr Foster, not a causey newsmonger. Yet he listened. It rather shamed him later to think how eagerly he had mixed with this Saturday-night crowd, allowing himself to be accosted by folks who did not know him, or presumed to know him only because he thrashed their ladies, and giving civil ear to them as they churned the matter with their tongues. Where was Rab Cuick? And what was the woman doing in the boat? Again and again, and always with a sense of angry doubt, he saw that figure stealing among the trees at Torrie. The vision seemed to hold at once the solution and the perplexity of that other question. A great moral discontent kept him out in the street searching for the answer.

He turned in at the harbour

and walked down to the point of the pier where people were hanging about waiting for confirmation of tidings that lacked no certainty. The talk there ran on whether the bodies would be found. The sea pundits said No. The tide was flooding when the boat was swamped, and it ran strongly at that point. The natural fondled a hope which he displayed tearfully from group to group. He had been balked of my corpse earlier in the day. "Wassh—it—not—possible—Mishter — Forshter — that — some—o'—them—ss'ud — be—fund?" he asked, sidling up to the Master. Mr Foster edged away from him without answering, and hastened back to the harbour-head. Under one of the lamps there a horrible old man, with a grey-blue jersey, and a pudding-stone-like nose beside which one eye glowed unwinkingly, was haranguing an audience on the causes of the accident—"His version, the only true and authentik." He was very drunk.

"I was at'owre my doorstep when the whillie-wha sailed oot o' the harbour, and I saw her, . . . and in 'dition Capt'n Galbraith he said to me aince, an' Capt'n Galbraith was th'mos schkilfu' nauv'gator 'tween here and the Port o' Lunnon. . . . But anon!"

He pawed the air gravely. His hands showed blue in the lamplight — indigo-dyed. "Blue-Thoombs" was his by-name. He went on—

"Young Robin had the tiller; t'other chield the main-sheet.

The deid wumman—puir lamb! —she was forrit. It was blawing a bit doon the Firth, an' the tide was flooding. Robin ran her doon the coast—ye think so, div ye?—to Torrie P'int belikes?—jist so. . . . And in the nesty, short following sea he had his own a-do's to keep her from getting broadside on, an' broachin' to? . . . To be sure. And aff Torrie P'int, being in a hurry to mak' the ship, Robin, he gybes. . . . Poof comes the wund! Whup! the sail is roond! Ower she heels, broadside on, her boom deep into the watter!—and it's all away wi' them. Her sail fills, and down she goes! A' in a clap! . . . Amen! . . . Ye think so? . . . Weel, that wasn't hit ava!"

He looked at them in a solemn derision, the single eye glowing solitary in the lee of that conglomerate nasal promontory.

"Come to me for the facks," said he again. "Neyther gybe nor wear—for why? Becas they bore down straicht on the ship from the harbour-mouth, and were running ashore when they were swampit at Torrie P'int—for why? Becas she wis full o' water—for why? Becas—no, she didn't ship it, if you'll allow me, Mr Shairp-nose—but becas she was leaking—and—for—why? Becas that set-me-up fleegarie gewgaw o' a cocked-hat—she was a — Audmiral, she was — cam ploomp! on the sandbank in reaching out o' the harbour, and sprung a bolt, jist as Capt'n Galbraith, schkilfu' nauv'gator, said to me sitting

up in the 'Sir Awndra' there when he said, 'Blue,' says he . . ."

The crowds in the street, as they passed and repassed Rab's house, stopped in front of it to gaze up at the windows behind which the drowned woman and her boy had lived; so that Mr Foster walking away from Blue's harangue had to slacken his pace and to work his way through the block. He caught sight of David Cook hanging back a little in the close-mouth, an incongruous figure, with his white and tense face surmounted still by the kepi in which he had played the colonel. With a wonderful restraint and dignity, tipped indeed with the exaggeration which touched all that family did, the boy was answering curious and sympathetic inquiries, and keeping the more pressing from mounting to the house-door.

It was Dave who had come running upstairs two hours before with the terrible tidings. He had signalled Charlotte out from the kitchen, where she sat dumb under Aunt Sarah's callous, querulous tongue, revolving that inexplicable transformation in her mother; and in the dark in the front room on the sea, holding her in his arms as he had never held her before, he told her how it had bereaved them. Yet even in that unspeakable first embrace of brother and sister in the agony of their greatest loss, when under the fiery ordeal the bud of their young affections burst in passionate flower, their minds leapt together to an

understanding of the new part that was required of them. They were quick-witted: they had come through the hards of childhood—the mental hards. They knew the town, and already in anticipation they knew how their mother's reputation would be shredded on its teeth. That had been their concern while she was living, the filial chivalry that caused them to make it so preventing them from acknowledging it to each other, to themselves even. Now that she was dead it was their trust. The girl was still dissolved in doubt, fearing and resisting that impulse of her mother which she could not understand, but Dave lifted her to assurance on strong arms. His saner, coarser sense, which appraised a bit smug-gling at its true value, accepted his mother's action loyally, in faith unquestioning, and wrapped her round with the masculine tenderness that will keep a woman's name off common lips even in admiration. So in their unspoken purpose Charlotte had gone back to the kitchen when Dave had cleared it of lamenting neighbours; and having found Tam and sent him to the pier-head to await the latest tidings from the pilot-boats and other craft that made forlorn search in the Bay, he took his stand in the close-mouth, keeping guard on the honour of the house, as he felt in some fine, highly-coloured way.

Mr Foster knew nothing of this; but in some mysterious manner the subtle elements in this affair were impinging upon

his fine and salted sensibility, as the fine and subtle elements all around us do constantly converse with single and spiritual minds. And so it was that a swift divining understanding of the true mettle in Dave Cook, playing his manful part in the close-mouth, assailed him. Here, he recognised by a sudden inspiration, was character at its higher levels. He went up to the boy and put his hand upon his shoulder. It shows how shaken he was.

"Admirable, sir!" he said.

Dave was startled by commendation from that grandiloquent source, but the true emotion of the master lit his understanding. He bit his lip to keep his tears from showing.

"My sister — Charlotte — is upstairs, sir."

Mr Foster felt a sudden uplifting at the boy's nobility. They were lifting each other into spiritual heights. He put a hand on Dave's shoulder again in recognition of the unspoken request, and went up the stairs.

The door was off the catch. Charlotte and Dave felt closer to each other with it so. When Mr Foster pushed it open and entered, Aunt Sarah's voice came to him from the kitchen in a high affrighted "Who's there!"

"Oh! Mr Foster, I'm relieved," she cried when she saw him. "I knew it couldn't be the nurse—I've sent Mr Shirra for a nurse, though where he's to get one Heaven only knows—and I was terrified it was them bringing up the bodies. . . . D'ye think they'll find them—and bring them up here?"

I couldn't bear the sight of them — dripping wet, the clothes washed off them maybe. . . .” She flung up her hands. “Couldn't they take them to the police-office, couldn't they? Or there's the model-lodging, just beside the harbour? . . .” She ran on upon this in her callous shrill voice, not giving Mr Foster a chance to speak. His gorge was rising.

“David's in here,” she cried. She made a little run into my room and ran back again. “It was kind of you to come. These scoundrels of boys—that scoundrel of a boy, Dave Cook—nearly hanged him. . . . All wet and damp through wi'spray, . . . and now he's in a fever of course—delirious—and the doctor won't let us move him. And I must stay here unless his father find a nurse for him. Here! Here!” She flung round her hands in token of the disreputable walls within which she found herself.

“ . . . What's the truth of this discreditable story?” she cried next, dropping into a calmer voice of malice. “For discreditable it is, without a doubt. Though I've heard no particulars. I always doubted that woman—always! What was *she* doing in a boat? Eh? And where was Rab Cuick, I would like to know? Where is he? Why is he not here—though if he come in, out I go. It's bad enough to be here—but I'll do my duty by Grace's child. To the last. . . . But not with him here. . . .”

“He, the pimpernel, hides in ill weather,” said Mr Foster, suddenly striking out for him-

self the truth about Rab in his anger and disgust at this woman.

Some of the wrath and indignation in his words smote her and silenced her. My voice was raised, deliriously. I was down on the shore again that first day with Charlotte when she told me of the call of the sea-witch. “Do you hear him wandering—nonsense, all about the sea and sailing. Nonsense that he learned here, in this house, from these folk,” she cried shrilly, recollecting her grievances afresh. She ran in to me, fluttering over me, feeling my head and my pulse in her agitation. “Will you come and see him?” she cried out to him.

“Where is Charlotte Cook—the girl?” he answered her.

She stepped out into the kitchen, looking at him in sharp surprise. Her eyes went beyond him, and he turned at the fling of her head. Charlotte was in the doorway.

The girl came forward and shook hands with him, all composed. She had heard him ask for her, so she supposed he had come to see her. In her mind she associated his visit with that to be expected from the clergyman, who came to tell folks the worst, and condole and pray, and went home again to his own unherried household. Dave and she had told each other the worst. But she would listen to him—that was all in the part they had to play.

Mr Foster, preternaturally sensitive, felt what was in her mind. He was filled with a fresh disgust—this time for the

clergyman's office. He wasn't an official breaker-of-bad-news, or offerer-up of prayers. Yet he had accepted the office of consoler, and the girl was waiting for him to speak. And there was Miss Trail looking on and listening. He fumed at his false position.

Aunt Sarah was calling him again to come and listen to my nonsensical ravings. He put a hand on Charlotte's arm, and she followed Aunt Sarah with him.

"The sea's a witch, and if she wave her wand for you to come, you maun go, though you never rest by a fireside again."

"Hearken to him!" cried Aunt Sarah querulously.

"Robin Cook's bewitched: he's just waiting till Cocked-hat Nicholson's boat's ready, and he'll be off, . . . and Aunt Charlotte and all of us; . . . we are going to sail for the Happy Islands."

The girl grew rigid under Mr Foster's hand. He drew her into the kitchen. "She

has reached them," he whispered to her, almost ashamedly.

The tenderness, the confusion, the confidence in her understanding and high level of feeling, filled the girl with a great and surprising emotion.

"Thank you," she said. She put her hand in his, and looked at him with a wonderful understanding out of her full eyes.

Aunt Sarah saw and heard. She stood silent in angry perplexity, vainly groping for the secret of their correspondence.

"Good-night," he said to her, shaking hands.

"Thank you,"—she repeated the girl's words mechanically.

At the door he stopped, hesitating. Then, with a conscious eye upon Aunt Sarah still—venial weakness, surely—he stepped back into the kitchen and kissed Charlotte on her brow.

Aunt Sarah flung up her hands at the sight. And therein Aunt Charlotte was vindicated.

(To be continued.)

LI HUNG-CHANG.

BY ALEXANDER MICHIE.

VOLUMINOUS comments in the press on the life and death of a Chinese public man prove the large place he filled in the history of our times; while the disjointed memoirs, largely made up of undigested scraps of conversation, and flavoured here and there by the obvious disappointment of interviewers who came to shear and departed shorn, show that an interval of time must yet elapse before a coherent estimate can be formed of the man and the statesman, Li Hung-chang. If even good-natured caricatures leave on the mind an impression of something lacking to a complete portraiture, how much more a picture that is inimical by intention. For it is not through the medium of vituperation that a public character can be seen in its just proportions, whether his name be Li Hung-chang, Joseph Chamberlain, Alfred Milner, or Paul Kruger. In the case of a statesman of a race which those who have the best means of knowing admit to be incomprehensible to outsiders, the application of our Western criteria is certain to mislead; and the facetious effort to follow that rule of contraries which is popularly held to be the key of the Chinese enigma does not correct, but covers one error by another still greater. An impossible mixture of these

two methods could only result in such contradictory comments as those with which the daily papers have been so extensively supplied. Qualities which would be applauded in a British statesman are held up to moral odium when exemplified in a Chinese, and an officious tribunal is set up which passes judgment without the least reserve on proceedings with which it can at best be only superficially acquainted. All this is in the day's work, and apparently hurts nobody. "Apparently," only, for it may have an obscuring effect on our faculty for observing events which closely concern our own country's welfare. When, for instance, we are confidently assured that Li Hung-chang made himself the tool of Russia, and consequently the enemy of England, we are not only asked to believe a double proposition *à priori* improbable, but are led by a false scent away from our proper goal—viz., the historic truth which would be serviceable to us in the prosecution of our national interests. To flatter our optimistic self-love, and to cover our own egregious blunders, we are taught to believe that our impotence in the Far East has been due, not to indifference on the part of our own Government or to the incompetence of their agents, but to the Macchiavelian intrigues of a solitary old man with one foot in the grave.

Were it true, such a confession might well make us despair of our country's fortunes; for never was there a more abject lament than the cry of defeat which we too frequently hear, and not alone in China—*Nous sommes trahis!* This is taking hold of the wrong end of the stick. Instead of whimpering over the unscrupulousness of our enemies, our business is to beat them; and if we cannot do that, self-respect should impose silence upon us. If the maintenance of our position in the world depended upon our being able to bring foreign statesmen, with their craft and strategy, into line with what we may from time to time consider to be our national interest, we should indeed be in a parlous state. Happily, we have only an objective concern with those outside forces. The safeguarding and wellbeing of our Empire depend not on the methods or character of aliens in either hemisphere, but solely on the spirit and the intelligence of our Government and people.

Without in any way presuming to anticipate the verdict of history on the part played by the deceased Chinese statesman in the evolution or revolution of the Chinese Empire, a few salient features in Li's career may not unprofitably engage our attention. Not the least remarkable of these was his indomitable industry; and here, if we are to apply Western standards at all, we should have to allow that the labours of European officials are but child's play compared with those of the Chinese. Nor is

it only the quantity but the infinite diversity of work, coupled with direct personal responsibility for all the consequences of errors, both of omission and commission, which weighs upon the Chinese official, and constantly paralyses his action. He has no period of relaxation, no week-end, no summer holiday, no retirement except under disgrace or the plea of some insupportable malady, and the only place of rest to which he looks forward is the grave. Six months ago Li Hung-chang was anticipating this termination to his labours with calm and almost cheerful expectancy. No doubt much of the work undertaken by Li was self-imposed, and the task he set himself was so gigantic that a larger experience of the world would have shown him it was quite beyond his power, or indeed that of any mortal man. But whatever the inspiration, his labours were, without doubt, continued to the utmost limit of his physical endurance. There was no shirking, and in the midst of it all he made it a point to find time to see every stranger who could make out a decent pretext for an interview. Such interviews became a feature in his scheme of life: he used them as a means of education. Having a retentive memory, he was able to balance the sayings of one foreigner against another, in order to arrive at what he supposed was a residuum of uncoloured fact. He was, of course, mistaken in this seemingly reasonable calculation, for he comprehended the European

spirit as little as the best-informed European comprehends the Chinese, and thus he lacked the faculty of true assimilation where foreign matters were concerned. Moreover, among his streams of visitors there was seldom one who was concerned to tell him the simple truth: they had their several axes to grind, and plied that occupation to the best of their skill during the hour or more which was freely accorded to them, being much disconcerted when the great man turned their inquisitorial weapons upon themselves. It was characteristic of Li that, however busy he might be, he never allowed his visitor to perceive the least sign of preoccupation as long as he had anything to say. When I saw him in Peking six months ago—while in the throes of an unequal contest with eleven clamant Powers, each demanding in tones louder than another “your money or your life”—having compunctions about fatiguing him in his feeble state of health, after an hour and a half’s talk I wished to take leave; but he begged me not to hurry away, assuring me that it was a positive relaxation to be able to converse freely with one who had no demands to make upon him. It is pleasant indeed to remember that I then saw the old man, humanly speaking, at his best, his rugged features softened into the calm of one who had fought the fight and was only waiting to lay down his weapons and be at peace. The feeling on both sides that it was for the last time lent

a touch of pathos, and even solemnity, to the interview. Though I had been warned that his infirmities prevented him from standing up, he not only rose to receive me, but insisted upon escorting me to the door, with an *empressement* never shown by him before. I could not wish to take leave of any friend in a happier or more charitable frame of mind.

Of the subject-matter of Li’s daily labours a fragmentary recapitulation will suffice to indicate their scope. He was not known to foreigners, and very little to Chinese, up to the age of forty, when, being an official in the province of Kiangsu, where the Taiping rebellion was raging at its hottest, he assumed an active part in its suppression. Having been previously a captive in the insurgent armies, during which time he saved his life by placing his pen at the disposal of the illiterate chiefs, he was better acquainted with the organisation and methods of the insurgents than any of his official colleagues. The experience so gained, joined to his natural ability, soon brought him into prominence in the provincial government.

His military and civil administration during those years, his campaign in different provinces in suppressing local rebellions, are among the best known of his achievements; and albeit the record as presented to English readers is obscured by a cloud of legendary fictions, which are constantly repeated, gathering, like Fame, strength in the process, yet the main

outlines stand out tolerably clear. It is not, however, these exploits, although they placed him at the head of the executive officials of the empire, that specially distinguishes Li Hung-chang from his contemporaries. It was rather the practical conclusion he drew from the proved impotence of the empire, as demonstrated by the foreign occupation of the capital. Other statesmen, no doubt, combining intelligence with patriotism, said to themselves, "This must not happen again," and to give effect to this resolution advocated the reorganisation of the defences of the country. But the burden of this enterprise fell upon Li. He alone carried it into practical effect, according to the light that was in him, and made it in fact the main business of his life during his years of vigour. Having learned, as he naturally supposed, the secret of the foreigners' successful invasion of China, and the idea having taken complete possession of him, he set himself diligently to acquire the means by which the foreigners had shown themselves so powerful. His personal intercourse with General Gordon during the suppression of the Taiping rebellion afforded him real insight into foreign methods of warfare, while the example of Gordon himself applied the needful stimulus which set his plans in motion. He saw, in fact, that drill, discipline, and modern weapons were the primary essentials of an army. He had also seen the ubiquitous foreign gunboat, and

deduced therefrom the importance of floating batteries. Antiquated coast defences, having shown themselves useless, must also be reconstructed, extended, and armed with the newest Western artillery. In short, the problem as it presented itself to Li was to build up an army, a navy, and a chain of coast fortresses on the model of those possessed by foreign nations. But to accomplish all this among a people wholly indifferent to such matters, under a Government whose ignorance was worse than blank, in that their minds were preoccupied with fantastic notions as to the outer world, and under the criticism of a whole army of literates whose knowledge of affairs was derived from semi-fabulous legends thousands of years old, was indeed a labour of Hercules. It would have been so even had the protagonist had a chorus at his back, whereas it is a singular feature of Li Hung-chang's career that he never had a party, and scarcely a friend, except among his own *protégés*. As to his family, it is questionable whether they were more of a help or a hindrance to him: in this he shared the common lot of his countrymen. Looked at askance as a revolutionary who was leading the country away from its ancient traditions into unknown paths, he never, in fact, received any encouragement in his innovating policy except from the Empress - Dowager, the most enlightened of the Imperial family. Those professional critics, the Censors,

whose fear-inspiring influence so often paralyses the action of Chinese officials, had never aught but evil to say of Li. And it has been remarked, as proof either of parsimony or indifference, that Li Hung-chang never "squared" these gentry, as is the custom of mandarins who have occasion to dread their denunciations. The attempt to reorganise the defences of the empire in the face of such opposing forces was really hopeless, the wonder being not that the scheme should have aborted, but that even the preliminary steps should have been taken. Let us transfer the case to our own country, and imagine how many Boards of Admiralty, how many Boards of War, National Defence Leagues, Navy Leagues, Royal Commissions, &c., would be necessary to revolutionise our military and naval services, and then consider what chances the ablest man in a country like China could have fighting the battle single-handed with all these auxiliary organisations, and many other influences which could be named, arrayed against him. That Li Hung-chang's enterprise must have failed on general grounds is therefore certain enough; at what particular points it broke down and for what reasons I have myself faintly indicated, from time to time, in the pages of 'Maga' and otherwise. At what epoch in his career the reformer himself became disillusioned it is impossible to say: probably the process was a gradual one,

coinciding with the failure of physical strength.

The portion of Li's great schemes which came more directly under the eye of foreigners was of course the navy, built up on English lines, with an English instructor, and officered by students in English schools. It is, therefore, in that department that we naturally look for those causes of failure which come most easily within the range of Western apprehension. They reached a climax in 1890, in the cabal among the captains, which Li was either unable or unwilling to control, whereby the English instructor, Captain Lang, R.N., was intrigued out of the Chinese navy. That successful plot sealed the doom of the service, which thenceforth deteriorated rapidly, until it became mere food for powder. When these things happened Li Hung-chang was told very plainly the fatal consequences which must ensue, and it is probable enough that he himself foresaw the collapse, and that the disheartening foresight caused him to relax in his endeavours to raise the fleet to a state of efficiency. But while the navy was neglected, great efforts continued to be made in the direction of fortifying the coast: there were motives at work there which did not apply with equal force to the ships. The ancillary services, such as the military and naval schools and the medical department, were also carried on with as much apparent zeal as they had ever been. The medical school, in

particular, at Tientsin received a new impetus and was granted a full official status about the period when Captain Lang resigned his commission; and the manner of it threw an interesting sidelight on the Chinese, or at least Li's, way of doing things, and in particular on the terms of easy intercourse which he maintained with the missionary bodies. The so-called "Viceroy's Hospital" had been "run" by Dr Mackenzie of the London Missionary Society with most satisfactory results. On the sudden death of Dr Mackenzie in 1888, the Viceroy appointed his own physician, Dr Andrew Irwin, to superintend the hospital and the medical school, while the Missionary Society appointed one of their own men. There was a deadlock; neither would yield: the whole hospital scheme had to be remodelled; and a question about the property not unnaturally followed between the Viceroy and the London Mission. The principals failing to come to an agreement, the case was referred to the arbitration of two Europeans, one being an English missionary, who made an award without calling in an umpire. The severance of the tie between Li Hung-chang and the London Mission was thus effected in a way honourable to both parties.¹

In addition to those labours which I have ventured to call self-imposed, because they were initiated solely by himself, Li Hung-chang, in his capacity of Superintendent of Trade, was kept incessantly occupied with commercial questions of all kinds affecting the northern ports of China, and it was this that brought him in constant contact with foreign officials and merchants. For this office Li was particularly well qualified, having a great capacity for business and a sympathy with traders, ship-owners, and so forth, quite different from the common run of Chinese officials. He himself was a trader in his way, having initiated a great native steamship company which is still in full activity on the coast and rivers of China; also a telegraph system, with ramifications which extend throughout the empire, the coal-mines of Tongshan, and the pioneer railways of North China.

Of all these operations the Western public can form rational estimates; but a large part of the work and responsibility of Li Hung-chang was purely domestic and territorial, and therefore out of the purview of foreign observers. He was the governor of the Metropolitan Province, containing a nominal population of 18,000,000, not all of the most law-abiding character. The

¹ This, however, did not prevent the publication in a catchpenny album trading on the horrors of last year, containing views of China with appropriate letterpress, of a representation of "the Christian hospital at Tientsin, first patronised and then confiscated by a heathen Viceroy." It is fair to the London Missionary Society to say that they emphatically repudiate the statements contained in that publication.

functions of this office necessitated residence for a portion of the year at the provincial capital, Paoting-fu, far in the interior; but the fear of a rising during the winter months when the sea-communications were blocked by ice caused so much pressure to be put on the Viceroy, both by natives and by the foreign residents, that for a good many years he remained permanently in Tientsin while the territorial administration was carried on by his deputies at Paoting. But whether at the one place or the other, Li always took effective measures to keep the peace within his jurisdiction. During nearly a quarter of a century of the Viceroyalty of Chih-li no rising against foreigners, whether missionaries or other, was allowed to take place; and considering the turbulent reputation of the populace, and the outrages of which they had previously been guilty, this fact attests the efficiency of Li Hung-chang's administration.

But after all, it is chiefly in his political character that Li has made a figure in the world. His position in the state was quite anomalous, for while the diplomatic intercourse with foreign Powers was carried on officially by the Board established for that purpose in Peking, of which Li Hung-chang was not even a member until after his disgrace, no decision was ever taken by the Tsungli-yamên without the approval of the Viceroy. His office of Superintendent of Trade conferred

upon him direct authority on the questions which chiefly occupied the foreign consular and diplomatic bodies, in the treatment of which the action of the Peking Board was habitually evasive. This abnormal state of affairs was naturally irritating to the foreign Ministers, who were doomed to transact business with an irresponsible, or at all events unresponsive, Board in Peking, while the real executive authority was wielded by provincial rulers, not only in the province of Chih-li, but also on the Yangtze and in Canton. The position of Li Hung-chang in particular came to be very much resented by the foreign representatives in the capital—by none more so than by the British Ministers. Sir Harry Parkes, who stood up for strict orthodoxy in all things, kicked against the false position in which the diplomatic body was placed, but his life was cut short before he had time to effect any change. Meantime more than one of his colleagues, seeking what was practical rather than what was legitimate, one after another paid their court to Li Hung-chang, and made visits also to the southern viceroys, which they seemed to find conducive to the furtherance of their business.

As the actual, though unofficial, adviser to the throne, Li Hung-chang has, not always unfairly, been held responsible for the acts of Government, especially in its relations to foreign countries, during a whole generation; and it is therefore an interesting subject of inquiry

what that policy has been. It has seemed to pass through several phases, and it must be owned presents a confused picture to the observer. Li in particular has been held representative of all that is tortuous, wily, intriguing, and so forth, while in point of fact if we regard his career in broad outline his central aim appears to be simple enough. He was a pilot whose business was to keep the ship off the rocks. In order to do so he had to *ménager* the captain, conciliate the crew, and avoid collisions with other craft. It was really a humble rôle he had to play, and frequent humiliations attended it. Opportunism, the study of tides, winds, and currents, the movements of other vessels which observed no rules of the road, were the necessary conditions of safety. To secure this, sacrifices had from time to time to be made, cargo had to be jettisoned, and the courses changed to avoid collision. Occasionally the situation was redeemed by bluff, but in a great majority of cases safety was purchased by concessions, graceful or otherwise. Thus, Japan was bought off in 1874 by the payment of an indemnity. Again, in 1885, to avoid a war which after all would probably not have taken place, Japan was admitted to a partnership with China in the control of Korea, always a fatal arrangement for the softer partner. About the same period peace with France was purchased by the cession of Tongking. And in 1894 he would probably have surrendered

China's interest in Korea, which was in reality only a profitless burden to her, as all the outlying territories were, had such a question ever assumed a definite shape. These concessions, however, though purchasing peace, were all steps in the downward course of China, logically leading up to the cession of Manchuria to the demands of Russia. Was it that Li Hung-chang had been successively pro-Japanese, pro-French, and pro-Russian? Or was it that he, according to his lights, was simply pro-Chinese, seeking to save the essential by the sacrifice of the unessential? It might be argued that in her policy of concession China had no choice, and therefore bowed to the inevitable; but it is yet no less true that each concession served only to whet the appetite for more, and was consequently fatal to the ultimate integrity of the empire, even within the limits of the Great Wall.

Directly opposed to this theory of the action of China and of Li as its agent is the assertion, which continues to be made in quarters which might be better informed, that Li Hung-chang provoked war with Japan in 1894. A partisan would, of course, say anything; and if responsible Englishmen persist in saying that the British Government with malice aforethought made war upon the South African Republics, one need not wonder at a similar misreading of history in the Far East. The Japanese at-

tack on China is well known to have been organised by many years of active preparation, carried on with miraculous secrecy. China, on the other hand, was as entirely unprepared for conflict as were the British when the South African territories were invaded by the Boers. There was indeed a curious parallelism between the two cases: inferior weapons, defective intelligence, chaotic counsels, and more besides than is quite pleasant to contemplate. We paid heavily for our inefficiency; the Chinese paid more heavily for theirs. We, by immense sacrifices, recovered ourselves, because we were inured to war and had a thousand years of military tradition behind us. The Chinese collapsed because they had no such reserve to fall back upon, such show of military and naval force as they possessed being as an exotic flower without a root, blown away by the first gust. That Li Hung-chang was aware of this state of things is absolutely certain, and he knew moreover that if war ensued with Japan the burden of its conduct would fall upon himself. Most strenuously, therefore, did he oppose every measure out of which any pretext for hostilities could be extracted. For good or for evil the attack on China was deliberately planned by Japan — by one man in particular, as is well known — and her spokesmen have never to this day been able to assign a plausible provocation on the part of China. The despatch of about 2000 troops to quell an

insurrection in Southern Korea has been by an effort of special pleading alleged as a justification to the Japanese for sending an army of 10,000 to occupy the Korean capital and make a captive of the king. The two Powers had agreed by the Convention of 1885 that should occasion arise for either of them to despatch troops to keep order in Korea, notice of the intention to do so should be given by the one to the other, so that both Powers should have an opportunity of being represented by an equivalent force. Accordingly China gave notice of her intention to Japan, who acted upon it so promptly that her army was landed at the capital, where there was no disturbance or pretext for foreign intervention, simultaneously with the arrival of the Chinese at the scene of insurrection. But even that small initial expedition of China, sent at the instance of the Korean king, was despatched in opposition to the remonstrances of Li Hung-chang. The influences which then guided the Court of Peking, the part played in the transaction by foreigners, are still veiled in mystery; but the one fact remains, that on that occasion at least the counsels of Li were overruled by the Court, and he was compelled to do in his executive capacity that which his judgment condemned. It is only in accordance with the world's ordinary justice, however, that he should be passed down to history as the author of the Japanese war — a calamity which he would

have sacrificed almost anything to avoid.

Li's cherished design of making war on Japan has also been inferred from certain state papers translated by a Japanese and published in England a few years ago. These included a memorial to the throne against the Japanese by a well-known Chinese fire-eater, and a report on the memorial by Li Hung-chang, to whom it was referred in the ordinary course. Li in his comment did not waste words in traversing the thesis of the memorialist, but merely remarked that, though the idea was good, time must be carefully chosen for giving effect to it. The formula was equivalent to the motion made in our House of Commons that "the bill be read that day six months." It was the bucket of water into which the hot iron was plunged.¹ And the act was in entire conformity with the policy and practice of the Viceroy throughout his political career, a policy which he has followed consistently till the day of his death. Set in its least favourable light, it may be called the policy of "peace-at-any-price," a principle which must prove destructive to any state which follows it.

Apart, however, from all successes and failures, the imposing personality of Li Hung-chang cannot be easily explained away. He has been the indispensable man. However frequently the Imperial Court has gone through the form of degrading him, every difficulty, every crisis, has brought him again to the front: he has had to defend breaches which he had no hand in making, and to patch up quarrels which he would never have allowed to reach the burning point. Not by strength of character alone, nor yet by purity of administration, for there have been during his time stronger and purer officials than he, yet there has never been any one who was in the least competent to fill his place as the international representative of China. This was clearly demonstrated during the Japanese troubles, when the Chinese Government did its best to avoid employing him after he had been deprived of his offices. He was nevertheless found to be the only man competent to negotiate. The Marquis Ito, who knew him well, exclaimed when an enterprising newsagent had reported his death, "Why, if that man dies, I shall have to bring him

¹ Curiously enough, while correcting the proof of this article, another similar misinterpretation—as I venture to consider it—has been fallen into by Mr H. J. Whigham, the special correspondent of the 'Morning Post,' in his most interesting letter published in that journal on November 19. Verily, "the letter killeth." To read any Chinese official document literally, especially a memorial to the throne or the report on it, would often lead to grave misconception. The case seems to be this: a collision is threatened; the locomotive cannot be arrested by a man standing in front of the wheel, but it may be switched off the line of danger. Such seems to be the true meaning of Li's habitual attitude towards the fire-eaters on the various occasions when he proposed delay instead of a direct negative to schemes which were after all without form and void.

out of his grave to negotiate peace." And when the troubles of 1900 broke out, it was urged with copious but misdirected anathema by the English press that Li should not be allowed any resumption of authority in Northern China. Futile clamours were set up for detaining him in Canton, for holding him as a hostage in Shanghai, and for subjecting him to sundry personal indignities during his progress to Peking; yet, in spite of all, he was found by the exhaustive process to be the only man capable of dealing with the emergency.

Something more is needed to account for the eminence of an old and friendless man than mere astuteness, evasion, venality, and so forth. Might not the secret rather be found in that side of his character which has received, so far, the least recognition from the world, which has envenomed the whole official hierarchy of China against him, and which earned for him the most odious epithet known to the Chinese vocabulary, "The friend of foreigners"? Had it been true, the implied reproach would not have been a very unjust one, for patriotism must always come first. But though Li had a tolerably extensive acquaintance with foreigners of all nations and classes, and was on what is called friendly terms with not a few, he was never the friend of every country but his own, in the opprobrious sense in which his fellow-countrymen use the word. His respect for foreigners was rational, based on his clear perception of the superior power

of the Western nations, and the consequent necessity for China, by some means or other, to borrow their methods if she would save herself from ruin. He was, moreover, at least in the earlier part of his career, favourably impressed with the character as well as the power of foreigners, of whom General Gordon stood to him as the prototype. Throwing over the historical Chinese prejudices, which up to that time had led to disastrous collisions with foreign nations, Li frankly entered into a scheme for learning all that his quondam enemies had to teach, and for employing them freely in the work of reforming the defences of China, and purchasing their weapons and appliances. As a preliminary to this great enterprise, Li had to change many of the traditional usages of his order. The first step was to establish free intercourse with foreigners, whom his predecessors had spurned from their footstool, and he became accessible to all sorts and conditions of men. Such an innovation by a Chinese mandarin was unheard of. We have but to think of the superb arrogance of such representatives of the mandarin class as Commissioners Lin and Yeh, to appreciate the greatness of the change inaugurated by Li Hung-chang. He was the first Chinese official who claimed from the Imperial Government the amicable treatment of foreigners, who vindicated in memorials to the throne their equality, and even in some respects their superiority, to the Chinese.

This of itself was a daring venture, an unpardonable violation of the national tradition. Had it seemed feasible to shield China from all contact with outer nations, or to expel them by force or fraud, we cannot doubt that Li would have thrown himself heart and soul into that cause; but since that was entirely out of the question, the next best thing was to break the violence of the impact, and to establish a communication between China and other States which might be carried on without periodical recourse to arms. Such was the central idea which seems to have governed the policy of Li Hung-chang from the day when he first made the acquaintance of foreigners until the day of his death. In following it out he had recourse to many devices, of which the regeneration of the defences of the country was an essential one, for on the face of the thing it was absurd to speak of equality in the relations between States armed to the teeth and one which was defenceless. Foreign critics who have never been backward in judging things Chinese strongly disapproved of the money spent on armaments, which they maintained ought to have been spent in internal reform. But recent developments seem to show that Sir Frederick Bruce was nearer the mark in saying, forty years ago, that it was the weakness, and not the strength, of China that was a danger to Europe. The assumption of superiority by China, coupled with her actual inferiority, was the anomaly

which Li sought to put an end to by levelling down the hereditary and preposterous pretensions of the Chinese governing body on the one hand, and by levelling up their material strength on the other, so that China might be able to hold her own, peaceably and confidently, in the comity of nations. To this end he constituted in his own person the adaptable joint round which Chinese and foreign relations might revolve with smoothness and safety. In this conception of the true basis of international intercourse there is no evidence of Li Hung-chang having had a single sympathiser among his countrymen; and of course his solitary efforts were wholly inadequate to give effect to the idea. Nevertheless, it was a conception not unworthy of a patriot and a statesman, and it is not every statesman who, in the face of all but universal opprobrium, would be ready to stake life and reputation in the prosecution even of essential reforms.

Among the criticisms of the life of Li Hung-chang, it is said to his disparagement that he looked through Chinese spectacles,—that his ideas, his prejudices, and even his superstitions, were Chinese. What else would the ingenuous critic expect of a graduate of the Hanlin College, an official who never left his country till after seventy, and how would he describe his own prejudices? “In spite of all temptations to belong to other nations,” Li could not help being one of that people who

number on the earth's surface anything from 200 to 400 millions, according to the oral rotundity of the speaker. Notwithstanding his heredity and surroundings, however, Li Hung-chang throughout his career evinced a consistent appreciation of foreign manners and ideas. Not alone in the importation and construction of machinery, and the application of physical science, and in matters generally external to himself, was his belief in things foreign demonstrated; but where his own person was concerned his faith was no less robust. The public medical services which he inaugurated were in fact but an expansion of the treatment which he had embraced for himself and his family, or as many of them as were disposed to follow his lead. As during the last scenes in Peking, so in the only dangerous illness he had previously gone through, just ten years ago, his half-enlightened family made strenuous efforts to dissuade him from employing a foreign doctor. But though prostrated, and almost in the article of death, his confidence in foreign medicine remained unshaken. "He will die if he continues the foreign treatment," was the lamentation daily and hourly howled at the bedside of the patient; and even the day of his death was fixed for the winter solstice, then only a few days distant, a day of omen for the sick in China, as the ebbing of the tide is amongst our coast population. As Dr Frazer, a genial Ulsterman, entered, the sick man looked

up and asked the one question, "Shall I die on the 22nd?" A cheery "No-o-o!" reassured the patient, who began at once to take nourishment, and in a few days was transacting public business—from his bed.

On the personal character of Li Hung-chang, apart from his public record, it is not necessary to expatiate. For one thing, it does not particularly concern us, and then we know less about it than we do about the private life of our own public men. And as even in their case a decent reticence is usually observed over their open graves, a similar restraint might be observed towards the statesmen of distant countries, without defrauding the reading public of what they may conceive to be honestly due to them in the way of personal gossip. It is said that he was venal, which is no doubt true in the sense that no Chinese official can live upon his salary, and must therefore derive his income from commissions and donations of various kinds, all perfectly regulated and understood. The whole Chinese civil and military administration is based upon this barbarous system, for there is nothing in that country corresponding to our Western—and that only modern—economy. To contend that Li Hung-chang was untainted by a system so deep-rooted, consecrated by the usage of ages, or even to deny that avarice, the vice of the old, grew by what it fed upon, as it does throughout the world, would be absurd. Such, however, are the inequalities of human judgment that contem-

poraries of Li Hung-chang, whose successful covetousness by many times exceeded his, and whose hands were moreover stained by crimes which are insinuated, without a tittle of evidence or justification, against Li, are never mentioned by foreign critics except in terms of respect.

There is no kind of misdemeanor with which Li Hung-chang is not freely and effusively charged, without a scintilla of truth. Indeed, publicists permit themselves a degree of licence in dealing with the private affairs of Chinese which they would not, for fear of the law of libel, venture to indulge towards the most felonious of their fellow-countrymen. It is usually the same class of writers who are the loudest in complaining of the unfriendliness of their victims, without considering that friendship implies reciprocity, or bringing forward a single reason why the objects of their invective should be friendly. In answer to one at least of these loose charges, it may be sufficient to affirm that the domestic life of Li Hung-chang was exemplary. For the rest, though not wanting in what are commonly recognised as Chinese characteristics, yet from some of these Li was exceptionally free. Perhaps the most active passions of the Chinese official classes are envy, jealousy, and malice. Under these impulses mandarins, high and low, engage in elaborate plots to undermine rivals and to pursue their enemies to the very death. Jealousy no doubt showed it-

self, and no great wonder, in Li's declining years; and envy was probably as constant with him as it is with the majority of men. But rancour seemed to have no lodgment in his mind; indeed, he probably carried placability to a fault, often condoning treacheries in subordinate officials which merited more drastic treatment. His turn of mind being constructive, he wasted no time in those pulling-down intrigues which occupy so much of the ingenuity of the ordinary Chinese. "Let them go on, and see what they will make of it," represents his habitual attitude towards reformers, schemers, and competitors for Imperial favour. It is well known that he had ruthless enemies in Peking pledged to his ruin; yet even towards those who were banded together to have him assassinated he remained philosophically complaisant. Speaking last summer of the prospect of a peaceful ending to his life, he was asked whether he was not afraid of those implacable enemies of his, "Oh no," he said, "those who sought my life are dead, executed at the behest of the Allies; let them rest." There was no trace of bitterness in his expression.

It must strike any one who has given attention to the course of events in China during the past generation, that a Chinese statesman so broad-minded and free from prejudice as Li Hung-chang, and so devoted to progress and reform, would have promoted these objects by a closer alliance with another representative of pro-

gress, the man who was in fact, by his position, the embodiment of material reform in China, Sir Robert Hart. Such truth as there may be in this reflection is obvious on the surface; but it is not to be inferred from their keeping apart that the two men did not play powerfully into each other's hands. The institution presided over by the Inspector-General of Customs was, in fact, one of the fulcrums of the Viceroy's lever, while the influence of Li was the prop which has maintained the Customs administration intact. Jealousy undoubtedly existed between them—how could it be otherwise?—and if ever the Inspector-General aspired to the exercise of undue authority over Chinese administration, the Viceroy Li was prompt to frustrate his schemes. On the other hand, when a determined effort was made by a high Chinese official, in concert with certain foreigners, to supplant Sir Robert Hart in the control of the Customs, it was the same Viceroy who effectually intervened to suppress the conspiracy and to establish the Inspector-General more firmly in his seat.

For five years Li Hung-chang was out of office, for his embassy to Russia in 1896, his service in the Tsungli-yamên, and his River Conservancy in Shantung, were but stop-gaps. A substantive appointment was, however, conferred upon him when he was sent as Viceroy to the Two Kwang in 1900. The genesis of this move to the south would be interesting con-

sidering its nearness in point of time to the anti-foreign uprising of the summer before last. It was once claimed officially, as a triumph of British diplomacy, that Li was sent away from the Tsungli-yamên in deference to the request of the British Minister,—a preposterous idea, which only shows the readiness of British officials, Government, and people to take refuge in every fool's paradise that offers itself. How far the appointment to Canton was motivated by the desire of the reactionaries in Peking to get so inconvenient an opponent out of the way, and how far that desire co-operated with the wish on the Viceroy's own part to be as far away as possible from the coming trouble, may be open to debate. When asked whether he was aware of what was impending, the Viceroy said, "He did fear that a storm was brewing, but could not foresee the form it might assume, nor form the faintest conception of the extent to which it actually went." It is a reasonable probability that had Li remained in Peking the storm which burst in June would have been averted. On the other hand, a weaker man at Canton during that very critical period might not have been able to check the rising which actually began there. Even as matters stood, the utmost vigour was called for to nip the southern insurrection in the bud. Some thousands of insurgents were arrested and executed, and in order to disseminate the message as widely as possible, these

executions were ordered to take place not in any special locality, but in every part of the great city of Canton in succession. By these drastic measures confidence was soon restored to the peaceable population, and Li's successor had an easy task in maintaining order. This saving of the situation in Southern China was no less important a feat than that of the Yangtze Viceroy, who saved the situation in the central provinces. But the fashion of the day is to overload the two with praise, perhaps more — coming as it does from foreign sources — than they altogether appreciate, while the action of the third Viceroy has been ignored, perhaps no less to his satisfaction. The commendation of an alien comes tainted with suspicion, is not always welcome, and sometimes highly embarrassing. A Chinese official once begged a foreigner, believed to have some connection with the press, that his name might never be mentioned in any foreign

newspaper, or, if mentioned at all, that it should be in terms of reprobation. "For that," said he, "may do me good, while praise from a foreigner would damn me in the estimation of my countrymen."¹

The termination of the extensive yet much restricted reign of Li Hung-chang leaves a great void in the Chinese world: how will it be filled up? There comes naturally a stage in the career of a reformer—if he lives long enough—when he slackens his efforts and becomes in his turn an obstacle to the more ardent spirits who are impatient to make their own mark. That period was reached, we believe, some time ago by Li, when he gradually assumed the rôle rather of a Conservative than a Progressive. Now the obstruction has been removed, and the younger men have free play for their schemes. Let us see, to use Li Hung-chang's words, what they will make of it.

¹ The well-known Peking correspondent of the 'Times,' who has rendered such excellent service to that paper and to the public for some years past, has recently uttered a note of warning to the Foreign Office as to the publication of communications from Chinese officials, seeing that the Blue-Books are studied in all the yaméns in China. The hint might with advantage be taken by the newspapers also, which are no less eagerly scanned for matter which may be used offensively by one Chinese clique, or individual, against another, and for evidences of the hostile intentions of foreign nations.

MUSINGS WITHOUT METHOD.

TWO YEARS OF EMOTION—GREAT OCCASIONS AND THEIR PAGEANTRY—THE RETURN OF THE DUKE OF YORK—OUR COLONIAL EMPIRE—THE CONFUSION OF TONGUES—THE OLD RADICAL AND THE NEW—AN EDITION OF HAZLITT—HIS POLITICAL PREJUDICES—HIS INTEREST IN LIFE AND LETTERS—WILLIAM HAZLITT AND SAMUEL JOHNSON.

THE last two years have been, for England, years of poignant and recurrent emotion. It is not our habit to wear our hearts upon our sleeves; we are not wont to parade our feelings in the eye of the world. The episodes which the hasty Pro-Boer is wont to call "reverses" have left us impassive; and the French reporter who was hustled over to London in the early days of the war, that he might describe a state of hare-brained panic, was disappointed both of copy and applause. But we have risen enthusiastically to every great occasion, and shown that we also can appreciate justified and appropriate display. Procession has followed procession with frequent solemnity; grief and joy have both been publicly recognised and expressed; and we guard a memory not only of pride and sorrow, but of the pageantry which symbolised these high emotions.

First, the Queen, with the prescience of approaching death, visited her people of London. None that saw that simple and impressive spectacle is like to forget it; none who listened to the hushed, respectful applause which greeted our Queen and

Empress, will ever abolish it from his ears. When the little lady in the big carriage drove for the last time through the streets of her capital, well knowing that it was for the last time, the hearts of her subjects were stirred by the same sentiments of hope and resolution which quickened her heart. The pessimist might have complained at that time of stress that victory was evading our arms, but the Queen, confident in the energy of her people, reassured even the waverers by her improvised visit. To have encountered the east wind of March in an hour of triumph would have been an act of bravery; to come forth when the bitter wind blew in our hearts, as in our faces, was such a deed of tact and courage as only a great Queen could devise. But sudden what seemed defeat turned to victory, and the streets of London took on another aspect. When relief was brought to remote cities long besieged, dignity and respect were changed to the over-turbulent expression of a natural joy. Our enemies, and they were not few, saw in the wild outburst which hailed the news of Mafeking's safety, a plain

testimony to England's decadence. But those same enemies would have read decadence in any expression (or suppression) of feeling; and for us it was enough to condone the just hilarity, wherewith the safety of our countrymen was received. If the citizens of London gave proof of a corybantic temper when the good tidings, so long deferred, were flashed along the wires, they speedily recovered their composure; and they welcomed Lord Roberts with a joyful greeting which befitted the occasion. The war in its palatial sense was finished; the policy of marauding and assassination was not yet inaugurated; and London did discreet honour to the Commander-in-Chief, whose skilful combination and rapid movement had conquered the rebels, and brought two fertile provinces once more beneath our yoke. On this day there was no sign of too reckless an enthusiasm; the satisfaction, being the more profound, was signified in terms of a quieter restraint; and even the enemy, still voluble, might have understood that the excitement aroused by Mafeking was already overpast.

Our next great pageant expressed a yet nobler sentiment, the sentiment of a humble, heartfelt sorrow. But humble as was the nation's sorrow for its dead Queen, there was an exultant pride in the obsequies designed as a final act of homage. Kings followed this mother of kings from her home at Osborne to her grave at Frogmore. The sea shone silver with a fore-

warning of spring, when her yacht carried her for the last time (of how many!) across the Solent. Her loyal army guarded the streets of London, as the sad, august procession passed, and the nations of the earth met at St George's Chapel to recite the last sad prayers. So bitter an experience rarely falls upon the world, because few monarchs have lived and died thus loaded with power in life, thus loaded with honours in death. Yet this experience, though infinitely the greatest, is but one of many that England has known in the brief space of two years.

And now another note is struck, a note of peaceful triumph. London has thronged the streets once again, this time to welcome the Duke of York on his return from an adventurous journey. The journey was devised by Queen Victoria, that the bonds which bind our colonies to the mother country might be strengthened, and this purpose has been worthily achieved. Not that there are any broken links in the chain of affection which holds our great empire, for never in our history has a common danger bound our sentiments and our interests more closely together. Our empire, if it was not won by the sword, has been guarded by the sword; and it is but fitting that the Duke of York should visit the domains over which he will be called to govern, at the moment when those domains have repaid the mother country for her care by blood and sympathy. Nor is

it only the aid which we have received from our colonies in the Boer War that made the season of the Duke's visit peculiarly appropriate. It was his privilege to open the first Parliament of a new Commonwealth on the other side the world. It was under his auspices that Australia declared herself one united nation, and how could England better offer her word of congratulation than by a graceful act of friendship? Moreover, the visit was in perfect accord with our tradition. We have held our colonies not by compulsion but by inclination. The other nations of the old world send forth their pioneers, in whose wake tramp policemen and postmen, and all the invariable symbols of an older civilisation. France and Germany discover deserts, and with the aid of flags and uniforms call them provinces. They impose upon the sparse inhabitants the laws which belong to an ancient code, and then they wonder that their success does not equal ours. Now, freedom is the basis of English colonisation,—freedom to live and legislate as best suits the conditions of a new country. The Union-Jack may float over another Parliament, but the laws passed beneath it are not suggested, though they may be ratified, in London. The *ditto* commemorated in the new title of our King is a word rather than a reality, and for this reason there is the less likelihood of a falling-away. The Duke of York, then, in visiting the dominions of his father across the sea, performed

a graceful act of friendship, which explains more clearly than pages of argument the sentiment which binds the colonies to our sea-girt isle.

It is an achievement of which he and all Englishmen may be proud. What Prince ever before had to travel 45,000 miles that he might visit his subjects? The distance alone should make us pray that the evil eye be averted; yet in the moment of our triumph we need not fear for the future. One sentiment alone has ever held an empire together, the sentiment of loyalty. If loyalty be absent, no force of arms, no fleet—be it the greatest in the world—can compel the submission of a distant and unanimous colony. But in all corners of our dominions a frank and honest loyalty greeted the Duke. He saw strange lands, and strange races; he listened to diverse tongues, and witnessed the survival of many an ancient custom. He heard the speeches of Maori chiefs and of Red Indians. He conversed with his own kin in Australia and New Zealand; in Canada he heard a loyal affection expressed both in English and French, and he discovered no more devoted subjects than the descendants of those who once bowed the knee to King Louis. If this be a great experience for a Prince, it is also a source of pride for us who sit at home and watch with jealous eyes the progress of our empire. Nor is England unmindful of the service which the Duke of York has thus simply and

bravely rendered. If he be not eloquent, at least he has proved that he possesses the gift of tactful speech; and while he has brought home an assurance of affection, he has left behind him a memory which will unite for ever all those whose sympathies and interests are cherished in common.

Nor was his greeting unworthy the occasion. His progress through London was marked by a general and spontaneous enthusiasm. The crowd welcomed the traveller with a simple sincerity which appealed to all spectators, and which was a proper recognition of a pleasant, if arduous, duty, most efficiently performed. Last of all, it was a happily arranged compliment both to himself and to our colonies that he who went upon his journey the Duke of York should be rewarded at his return with the august title of the Prince of Wales. Yet the success of the mission is not agreeable, we gather, to our neighbours. There is always a snail ready to leave his slimy trace upon the well-earned bays. We are informed by the gentleman who does the "foreign" politics for the 'Débats,' and whose ignorance has frequently entertained us, that the Duke of York's journey was a failure, because he addressed the French-speaking Canadians in his own native tongue. How the Duke's perfectly correct behaviour endangers the Empire the gentleman, whose horizon is bounded by the wall of his office, does not explain. Does he think that because the Duke acted with propriety the

French-speaking Canadians will shake off the British yoke and elect to be governed by those statesmen who a few years back cheerfully submerged their own land in a military scandal? And will the Maoris also revolt because the Duke did not address them in their own language? Of course the gentleman of the 'Débats' knows naught of history or of political courtesy. Nor does he seem to be aware that a perfect equality of speech is the most dearly cherished privilege of Canada. French or English is admitted everywhere without disadvantage to either, and the Duke spoke English to the Canadians of Quebec as naturally and reasonably as they spoke French to him. It is no wonder that the French fail to colonise, when they do not understand that a cordial interchange of languages is the symbol of freedom; and if they imagine that their journalist's ill-considered words will breed disaffection, they are hugely mistaken. Have they so soon forgotten the plain speech of Sir Wilfrid Laurier, who, if he did not flatter them, at least spoke a tongue which they all understood? However, as we have said, the snail is always ready to crawl, and fortunately the slime which he leaves is easily effaced. In brief, the gentleman of the 'Débats' is merely expressing a vague petulance. He writes without knowledge and without conviction. A mere hatred of England takes the place in his mind of learning, reason, and justice. But, strangely enough, in the late campaign of slander the

Germans have easily outdone the French. Not only is their language viler, but their regard for truth is less : they appear to have tossed their northern caution to the winds. Renan once said that the Germans beat the French because the Germans were more profoundly versed in philosophy. If he read the blusterings of the Anglophobe press, he would surely be of good heart, and believe that the *revanche* was more than half achieved.

But the opinions of the Continent are immaterial, and what is of greater interest to us is that the return of the Duke of York was marked, as so many events have been marked during the past two years, by an outburst of popular enthusiasm. There is no doubt that the love of processions has seized hold upon us. Yet it is not wholly a new love. In the spacious times of Queen Elizabeth a progress was at once the duty and the pleasure of a monarch. Elizabeth herself visited the remotest corner of her country, until her aspect was strange to few of her subjects, and this habit of free intercourse was not broken until the House of Hanover introduced less genial manners. Nor even then was London without its interludes of splendour, especially when George IV. sat upon the throne; for parsimony was not among that monarch's faults, and not even the indifference of the crowd chilled his love of gold coaches and military splendour. But for the last forty years pageants have been all too rarely seen in London. There were the

Queen's Jubilees to emphasise more strongly the prevailing greyness; but it was only with the war that we insisted upon all the ceremony and enthusiasm which a moment of high endeavour and gallant enterprise suggests. And as yet our talent for parade does not equal our intention. We have not the tact of stage-management which distinguishes the French. In our processions too much is left to chance; the details are but summarily arranged; everybody is allowed to set his own pace, to find his own position. The result is natural rather than artistic; the effects are not so much displayed as huddled; and you have only to cross the Channel on a great occasion to note an inevitable contrast. A procession in Paris is a single and consistent work of art. It is distinguished by delicate spacing as well as by splendour of colour. Great men are separated by a proper pause, and the crowd is not glutted by an over-rapid series of excitements. But skill, no doubt, will follow the habit, and now that spectacles are popular in London, taste and forethought, let us hope, will temper our spontaneous enthusiasm to order and beauty.

So the Duke of York rode back through London amidst the plaudits of his countrymen, and not even the voice of Radicalism was raised in envious protest. For Radicalism has changed during the last century, and though it still hates the fatherland, it assumes a

cloak of respect for the reigning house. Now, such a man as William Hazlitt would have set down the congratulation of a prince as the mere act of a slave, for he, the sturdiest Radical of his time, had as little love of courts as of colonies. The sympathies of Sir Walter Scott were, in his eyes, the mark of a servile mind, and he ranked patriotism among the meaner vices. But he was in all respects a far wiser and better man than the Pro-Boers of to-day. In the first place, he was a man of letters; in the second, he did not spend his days in the slander of innocent men, and in the purposed suppression of the truth. He was a good hater always, and a good fighter; yet he hated openly, and fought fairly. Nevertheless, his opinions are matter of regret, because they have too long obscured his very real merits. To his own age he was, for the most part, an acid controversialist, a Cockney scribbler, whom the spirited Dr Maginn thought beneath his notice. Yet all the while he was neither Cockney nor scribbler. He has analysed the folly of Cockneydom with a brilliance which should have absolved him instantly from the false charge; and he was so little a scribbler that he has left behind him a dozen volumes of admirable literature. But the violent expression of his opinions overshadowed his

talent while he lived, and though he has never lacked partisans, he has not yet received justice from a generation which bears no grudge against his Radicalism. At last a tardy monument is raised in his honour, the best of all monuments — a complete edition,¹ handsomely printed, accurately edited, and prefaced by an eloquent and well-deserved eulogy. The eulogy is from the pen of Mr W. E. Henley, who cannot be suspected of a secret sympathy with Hazlitt's views; and it is, therefore, all the more valuable a testimony to Hazlitt's genius. It is a model of clear and concise biography, and it is written with the "gusto" which in Hazlitt's eyes was the supreme virtue of the artist. At last, then, justice is done to the memory of a bitterly maligned man, and we may consider the admirable work achieved by William Hazlitt in the most sumptuous of editions and without rancour.

None the less, it is worth while to consider how it was that Hazlitt appeared to his contemporaries a man of "churling passion," who was united to no man save Lamb in the bonds of friendship. Politics and a theory of life were no doubt at the bottom of it. By ancestry and by inclination Hazlitt was a Radical Dissenter, who believed that conformity with anything was the vilest sin, and that the French

¹ The Complete Works of William Hazlitt in Twelve Volumes. Edited by A. R. Waller and A. Glover. With a Preface by W. E. Henley. Vol. I. London: J. M. Dent. 1901.

Revolution was the finest blow ever struck in freedom's cause. Thus he cherished in his boyhood wild, generous dreams of happiness and equality, which in his maturity he would have converted into realities. For his narrow views never changed. What he hoped at fifteen he believed at forty, and so firmly set were his own opinions that he deemed any man a traitor who dared to advance. And this explains his constant quarrellings. His unalterable consistency, always a grievous fault, made him difficult to live with, because he was, so to say, an evil conscience to the waverer. When Coleridge and Wordsworth grew up, and corrected the wild imaginings of their youth, Hazlitt was furious; and while he found no excuse, so he could extend no forgiveness. In fact, the rejection of an opinion once held was to Hazlitt a grave outrage upon honour, which he proceeded to reprove with all the eloquence he might command. With a keen sense of humour he might have reflected that Coleridge's fancy could not be bound in chains, and that so vague a philosophy could not but shift and change with the shifty breeze. But no, he was inflexible and austere. There was a time when in hearing Coleridge he was as delighted as though he had heard the music of the spheres. On this occasion "Poetry and Philosophy had met together, Truth and Genius had embraced, under the eye and with the sanction of Religion." And then Coleridge

composed a certain "Lay Sermon," and Hazlitt, wounded by his friend's defection, flouted and gibed with all the satire at his command. His ferocity is more creditable to his heart than to his head. It is justice carried to the pitch of injury; it is honesty exaggerated until it appears a sort of intellectual dishonesty. Yet it is the failing of a high and narrow mind, and though we may deplore it, we cannot find it in our heart to condemn. Vice it may be, but it is vice always inclining to the side of virtue.

Moreover, though Hazlitt was incapable of envy—indeed, he contended in a dialogue with Northcote that no man was ever envious—he was Radical enough to dislike success. We know not where to match him, save in those *cénacles* of modern France, which refuse to see a grain of merit in what they term an *arriviste*. Now, Coleridge and Wordsworth and Southey (especially Southey) were born *arrivistes* in spite of the revolutionary sentiments which they cherished in their youth; and for this reason, also, Hazlitt could not for long ally himself to them. The one splendid success of his time, to which he extended a loyal admiration, was the success of Napoleon; and he adored the Corsican chiefly because the Corsican started with all the odds against him, and trampled upon kings as well as upon the "Rights of Man."

But though Hazlitt was a Radical, he was no Democrat. Nay, more: wherever art and letters were concerned, he was a

stern reactionary. He hated utility, he hated progress, as bitterly as, in his phrase, Wordsworth hated conchology. He was an ardent champion of the classics, because he believed that education should not be practical, and because "the fine dream of our youth is best prolonged among the visionary objects of antiquity." And throughout his life he defended the present against the past with a splendid eloquence. With what a fine fury he attacked the commonplace critic, who is with us to-day, and who still speaks the same language which Hazlitt condemned! "Though he has an aversion to all new ideas," says Hazlitt, "he likes all new plans and matters-of-fact: the new Schools for All, the Penitentiary, the new Bedlam, the new Steam-Boats, the Gas-Lights, the new Patent Blacking." How well we know this monster, who will have nothing that is not new and shoddy and mechanical and American,—this monster, who hates all things that are not what he elegantly terms "up-to-date," and who believes that wealth and speed are sacred from reproach. But while Hazlitt detested progress, he respected all that was rare and aristocratic. When he listened to Northcote and Nollekens talking of Sir Joshua and Burke and Johnson, "the names of these great sons of memory," says he, "were in the room, and they almost seemed to answer to them. Genius and fame flung a spell into the air." And while he

loved all that was great and exalted, he hated whatever was common with a true Radical fury. He could not endure Wordsworth when he made heroes of pedlars and ploughmen. That, he said, "is getting into low company." And again: "The spirit of Jacobin poetry is rank egotism. We know an instance. It is of a person who founded a school of poetry in sheer humanity, on idiot boys and mad mothers, and on Simon Lee, the old huntsman. The secret of the Jacobin poetry and the anti-Jacobin politics of this writer is the same. His lyrical poetry was a cant of humanity about the commonest people, to level the great with the small; and his political poetry is a cant of loyalty, to level Bonaparte with kings and hereditary imbecility." It is wild talk, but it is not the wild talk of the Radical; and if Hazlitt were a Jacobin in politics, no man was ever a fiercer anti-Jacobin in the arts. Yet we read even his 'Political Essays' with pleasure, because we realise that if he had no talent for politics, he was an incomparable controversialist. In brief, he looked at all things with the eye of a partisan; he described all things with the pen of a partisan; and what he said of Milton might most worthily be applied to himself. "There is a decided tone in Milton's descriptions," he wrote, "an eloquent dogmatism, as if he spoke from thorough conviction, which he probably derived from his spirit of partisanship." That is the best account of Hazlitt, in whom

the spirit of partisanship was always burning, and who never spoke the idlest word save from "thorough conviction."

But politics were not the serious interest of his life. They were merely a reminiscence of a speculative boyhood spent among the Shropshire hills. What he best loved were books and men; and truly no man ever rightly loved books who loved not men better. And of books he preferred the old. "I have more confidence in the dead than in the living," he said with perfect truth; and when the world chattered of a new masterpiece, he was content to take an old friend down from the shelf. The fact that Sir Walter Scott alone was able to tempt him from the past is proof enough that his Jacobin opinions did not affect his Anti-Jacobin tastes. But, like most other active controversialists, he was never an omnivorous reader. He was, with Samuel Johnson, a man of few books. He has told us what they are, and truly they are sufficient solace for the most deeply literate of men. Shakespeare and Milton, Fielding and Rousseau, Cervantes and Smollett—these were among his friends, and though he regretted that he had never made Clarendon and Froissart his own, he need not have deplored the gaps. Above all, he respected, as he should, the high calling of a reader. He knew how happy was the man who is admitted to the society of the august dead. "To have lived in the cultivation of an intimacy with

such works," said he, "to have familiarly relished such names, is not to have lived quite in vain." And Hazlitt doubly redeemed his life from vanity. He not only read himself,—he persuaded others to read.

The best of his life, then, was spent among the few books which he studied again and again. By the time he was thirty his literary curiosity was dulled. But he never forgot the lessons of his youth, and when he began to write, which he did of necessity, and because he found no profit in painting, his mind was amply and generously stored. He wrote from a fulness of knowledge and with an energy of expression which have not often been surpassed. He neither corrected his proofs nor amended his judgments. There is not one of his essays which does not seem as though it were struck off at a blow. His style has the defects and qualities of his method. It is often slipshod and inaccurate; the words are sometimes tumbled down in grammatical confusion. But the meaning is never obscure, because Hazlitt always thought clearly; and the fault of expression is a mechanical fault of haste and heedlessness. Above all, he was a master rather of the phrase than of the word. That is to say, he seems to have found his phrases ready made, and did not look about him for the words which should compose them. And his phrases, once they are made, cohere without particles. The logical thread of his argument is so tightly held, that

he has no need of "buts" and "therefores," and the innumerable shifts of the inexpert. So that an essay of his contriving resembles the simple masonry of primitive times. The sentences fall into their places unattached, while the whole is as stable as those ancient walls whose blocks of stone fit and cohere without mortar. But, apart from its structure, there is a fire and dash in his style which defy analysis, and which proceed from a ripe mind and a vivid intelligence. He has less insight than Coleridge into general principles; he has not the imaginative subtlety which makes Charles Lamb the best critic of literature that ever lived. But he possesses qualities of which Lamb and Coleridge knew nothing. None of his contemporaries could have penned the magnificent letter to Gifford, the best piece of chastisement known to literature. No other could have written of sport, of the theatre, and of life with the brilliance and "gusto" which were always his. And it is this wide knowledge and tireless energy which make the least of his essays not merely a criticism of literature but a criticism of life to boot.

Literature was for him, as it should be, a kind of spring-board, whence he might leap to an intelligence of mankind. The impressions of life he corrected from literature; the impressions of literature found in his life their surest touchstone. He loved taverns and fives-courts, the theatre and the ring. He

has sketched the best prize-fight known to letters, and he has set upon paper the actual game of Cavanagh the fives-player. The achievement of the Indian jugglers put him out of conceit with his own skill; and whatever province of human energy lay before him, he surveyed with a perfect intelligence of its possibilities. For instance, he discoursed of Chubb's 'Tracts,' in which he found "a high gusto of polemical divinity," in precisely the same terms in which he discoursed of Bill Neate and Hickman. He knew the stage, as very few have understood that home of lost endeavour and false reputation. He is one of the few theatrical critics whose opinions still have a general application. His contrast of Pasta with Mars might be a comparison drawn to-day of Duse with Madame Bernhardt. "Pasta does not act the character," he says; "she is it, looks it, breathes it;" and no one who has seen Duse in "*Cavalleria Rusticana*," let us say, or in a comedy of Goldoni's, would hesitate to transfer the criticism. Madame Mars, on the other hand, is true not to human but to "French nature," and in this phrase Hazlitt, as though by prophecy, found the last word of criticism for Sarah Bernhardt. In brief, the simple truth of his judgments makes them valid beyond their day, and this, we suppose, is the highest tribute that admiration can ever pay to the critic.

Again, Hazlitt's interest in life gave him the keenest insight into character. Up and down

his pages are scattered with a lavish hand such sketches as would have made the fortune of a dozen novelists. Here he recalls Theophrastus, there he is a premonition of Dickens. His character of the "Cockney," inspired, as he tells us, by Mr Blackwood, is not unworthy the hand that drew Sam Weller. They are not amiable figures, these Cockneys of Hazlitt's, and therein they differ from the illustrious "Samivel"; but they are none the less true, and their traits are gathered by the hand of a master. The "slender youth, with purple face and drooping head, nodding over a glass of gin-toddy, and breathing in tender accents 'There's nought so sweet on earth as Love's young dream,'" may be seen at Hampstead any Bank Holiday. But, most of all, we like Mr Pinch, the Cockney fives-player, of whom the eminent Dr Goodman "could make nothing." The Doctor, being a purist, hated Pinch's game, which he found full of tricks and of "dirty mean ways." (We can match that objection on the Cricket Field to-day.) But, yet more than his game, the Doctor disliked Pinch's sanguine imperturbability. Nothing could shake his good esteem of himself. He had a ready (and foolish) answer pat to all emergencies. "It's impossible there should be any sympathy between you and me, Mr Pinch," said the irascible Doctor; "for as the poet says, 'How should the soul of Socrates inhabit the body of a stocking-weaver?'" "Ay,"

says he, "does the poet say so? *Then* the same to you, sir." The repartee is perfect, the very essence of Cockney impudence and Cockney fatuity. As Dr Goodman says, Mr Pinch would have posed the Devil with his "the same to you, sir"; and Hazlitt caught this Cockney on the hop, the justice of his capture being proved by the fact that Pinch is still with us.

Nor did this curiosity of character ever exhaust the enthusiasm of William Hazlitt. His portrait of Northcote has but one rival in English literature — the Johnson of James Boswell. We would not hesitate for a moment to compare him with the highest; and it is entirely due to Hazlitt's splendid presentation that James Northcote, painter of historical masterpieces, is alive to-day. He loved that thing of "air and spirit" with a love which Northcote's vanity did not permit him to return, and he seized his conversation upon paper with an infinite skill. But Northcote is not his only portrait. Remember the sketch of Nollekens, the man who "seemed, by time and labour, to have *wrought* himself to stone." Better still, remember the touching and beautiful gaiety wherewith he drew the portrait of Cosway, that child of imagination, who dwelt always in a fairy palace. "Fancy bore sway in him," said Hazlitt; "and so vivid were his impressions that they included the substances of things in them. The agreeable and the true with him were one."

Truly, Cosway was made of gossamer, and Hazlitt touched him with so light a finger that he did not disturb a single web. Thrice happy man! To live in a paradise of imagination; to be understood by his friend; and to be sketched by his wife, a worthy companion, as *toujours riant, toujours gai*! It is such creatures as these that bring happiness to the world; and again we owe Hazlitt a debt of gratitude for leaving us this picture of Richard Cosway—always smiling, always gay.

But when he allows his Radicalism to guide him, he tempts you to instant disagreement. His character of Pitt is nothing less than an outrage; but it is an outrage one would not like to have missed, because it helps to explain the infamy of our Pro-Boers, who attack their Government in precisely the same terms reserved by Hazlitt and his friends for the man who was engaged in the salvation of England. To Hazlitt Pitt was not so much a monster as an imbecile, and his dislike is easily understood. He regarded Pitt exclusively from the point of view of literature. He read his speeches, and found (which was half-true) that Pitt did not trouble to say anything. Of course the man who confounds eloquence with statesmanship—and Hazlitt was guilty of this primitive confusion—would turn naturally to Burke or Fox. And Hazlitt being in his heart no politician at all, forgot that the essence of politics is action. What would he have said to

Bill Neate, if that eminent scrapper had delivered an oration upon the art of self-defence, instead of plugging Hickman's eye? What would he have thought of Cavanagh, if, instead of doubling his fist and beating the stranger, he had given him a brief essay upon the theory of the game? Should he not, then, have asked of William Pitt, what he asked of his favourite sportsmen, the superior faculty of achieving his purpose? Of course he should, and then he would have discovered that Pitt was indifferent in speech because he was supreme in action, and we should not have had that experiment in shallow politics which Hazlitt terms "a character of Pitt."

Yet, despite his Whiggery, there is but one man of letters with whom we would compare William Hazlitt, and that man is Samuel Johnson. What Boswell has told us of his hero, Hazlitt has told us of himself, and in each case we have an ample record of taste and opinion. At first sight it seems a paradox to bring them together; but a closer examination proves the paradox not extravagant. In literature Hazlitt, like Johnson, was a fierce Anti-Jacobin; Johnson, like Hazlitt, esteemed the past rather than the present, and, like Hazlitt again, preferred lively thought and vigorous comment to the reading of popular literature. Had they met they might have fought, but they would both have enjoyed the fight; and in the end Johnson would have appreciated Hazlitt as he ap-

preciated Wilkes. In each was a strain of manhood strong enough to obscure the unessential. These two men, indeed, are still the glory of our Blood and State; and if we could compel a dialogue of the dead, we would as lief listen to Samuel Johnson and William Hazlitt discussing the high matters of life and literature as to any pair we can readily recall. They would quarrel, as what two strenuous spirits would not? But they would still find points of agreement, and one knows not which would win in the dispute—the short, fiery sentences of Hazlitt or the heavy roar of Samuel's artillery.

Meanwhile, we like to reflect that Hazlitt and Johnson are unique in the world's literature. They are both essentially English, and their unbroken popularity is the best counterblast to the success of the cheap novel. One edition of Boswell's Johnson follows another with

amazing rapidity, and there cannot be too strenuous a competition. Nor is there any edition which we would more cordially recommend than the last.¹ Mr Birrell is the wisest and most modest of editors. He has cut his portion of the work down to the narrowest limits. He has been content to give us an excellently printed text, with no more comment than is absolutely necessary, and the portraits are the best substitute for biographical notes. Between Johnson and Hazlitt there is a wide gap—a gap bridged by Northcote, who knew them both. But, as we have said, there is a link which binds Johnson, who died in fear of the wrath to come, to Hazlitt, who died happy. And he who would make the best of the year's literature will forget the novels of yesterday and to-day, and study these two new editions of ancient masterpieces.

¹ Boswell's Life of Johnson. Edited by Augustine Birrell, and Illustrated with Portraits selected by E. Radford. Westminster: Constable. 1901.

THE MINISTRY AND THE WAR.

LORD SALISBURY has spoken at Guildhall, and he has left the public as much or as little informed about South Africa as it was before. For some time past we have refrained from comment on South African affairs, because we felt that in the absence of fuller information useful criticism was difficult. The time has come, however, when it seems possible to speak with advantage, if it is only to discuss that feeling of dissatisfaction and impatience which, however unreasonable, is becoming very general. It is expedient, then, to go more fully into the matter than Lord Salisbury thought fit, and to examine the causes of the anxiety that prevails at present in the mind of every man who can spare time from his own affairs to think about the concerns of the commonwealth. There are several causes which appear to have given birth to this anxiety. They are—firstly, the duration of the war; secondly, the condition of the army; thirdly, the attitude of the Continental nations towards us, and the likelihood of complications arising while our hands are still full; and lastly, the seeming inertness and indifference of the Government.

As regards the duration of the war, the misgivings are, we think, unreasonable. If the conditions in South Africa are examined, and attention is paid to the history of similar operations, it will be seen that the expectation that a contest such as this could be brought to a

speedy conclusion was unjustifiable. It was founded, it is true, on the pronouncement of a great military authority, repeated in their speeches by responsible Ministers. It was accurate enough in the sense that the time for great efforts of strategy and operations requiring large masses of troops had gone. By the public, however, it was taken to mean that the submission of the enemy would not be long delayed, and that peace was at hand. The continuance of the strife, with its heavy losses in men and money, has caused much disappointment. The campaign has been, indeed, a series of disillusionments. There were many, and those not without experience of the Boers, who held that they would not fight. Others foretold that if they fought they would be made short work of by our troops. They fought and inflicted several sharp defeats on our forces. They were beaten eventually and their capitals taken. It was foretold then that they would not take to guerilla warfare. They took to guerilla war that the words of the prophets might not be fulfilled, and have given us a fine sample of it.

The Government of Lord Salisbury is accused of want of vigour in carrying on the war. When the reasons for this accusation are sought, nothing very definite is found. There is, indeed, a widespread opinion that the conduct of the war from the outset has been faulty. So far as this

refers to the beginning of the business, the Government would find it hard to rebut the charge. It must be admitted that the nature and the difficulties of the campaign were not understood and were underestimated. The standing reply of Ministers, that the public generally shared in their error, and that their military advisers were equally mistaken, is a very poor answer. The members of the Government have access to information that is not made public. They alone were in confidential communication with the High Commissioner and the Governors of the Colonies. They alone had access to the records of the Intelligence branch of the War Office, where, it is believed, Mr Kruger's armaments and the number of fighting men at his disposal were well known. All this knowledge, all this information, was open to the Government and to no one else. Even if it had been public property, it is no excuse for our rulers to say that if they erred the people shared the error. The captain who mistakes his course and wrecks his ship cannot excuse himself on the ground that his passengers were as ignorant.

Nor is there any more force in the plea that the Ministry were misled by their military advisers. The Prime Minister and his colleagues cannot shelter themselves behind their expert advisers. For what purpose are they there if they are unable, with all the means of judging at their disposal, to come to a right decision in questions on which the life of the Empire depends?

It is felt, moreover, that although the Government in their negotiations with Mr Kruger were playing for stakes that might mean war, they made nothing ready to meet that event. The consequence was that Natal and the Cape Colony were subjected to invasions that might have proved disastrous. We all know the stock answers to this charge: the British constitution; the Jameson Raid; the fear that they would be accused of provoking war; and the backwardness of public opinion in the country. But whose fault is it that public opinion was backward? Was anything done to rouse or instruct it in this matter? And as to the fear of being charged with provoking war, that is a dangerous plea to advance. In the name of every statesman who has led England to Empire, are we to sit to be shot at, lest by standing up and taking off our coats we may be accused of provoking the fight? There can be no doubt that the confidence of many people in the Government was shaken by their inaction and miscalculations at the outset. And the doubt thus begotten has extended, not always with reason, to the subsequent conduct of the war.

Once the die was cast, the Ministry acted promptly and with vigour. Thanks to our great mercantile marine, it was possible to land a very considerable army in the field with comparative rapidity. Thanks to the foresight and readiness of the Government of India, sufficient troops were placed in Natal to prevent the Boers from making a rush on Durban.

It is of no use to conjecture the course of events if Lord Roberts had been sent out to take the supreme command in the first instance, and had been allowed to go in advance of the troops to organise his transport and prepare his plans. So long as he remained in the field there was no want of vigour in the conduct of the war. After his return, owing no doubt to the belief that the business was nearly over, there was a pause and hesitation, until it was seen that the state of affairs was not improving. Then there was a fresh access of energy, which culminated in the despatch to South Africa of the 16,000 so-called Yeomanry. This force was gathered together from the highways and byways of town and country. Tempted by high pay, five times the reward of our regular soldiers, men enlisted in it who had no special qualification or aptitude for military work. The only possible excuse for this clumsy piece of extravagance is that there was no other means of obtaining reinforcements. If this plea is valid, all that can be said is, that the sooner our military affairs are put in order the better. As the case stands, it has contributed not a little to the distrust felt in the management of the war by the responsible authorities in England, and its consequences may not end there. At the same time, there is no reason to suppose that the deficiencies of these hybrid and highly paid yeomen, who were as fit to take the field as one of Mr Tree's stage armies, seriously hampered the Commander-in-

Chief in South Africa, whatever the cost may have been to the country. The incident, however, has led men to think that Lord Kitchener has not been fairly treated. Hence it comes that, notwithstanding the assurances of Ministers that there is no disagreement between them and Lord Kitchener, there is a pretty widespread feeling that he has not got all he wants, and that his hands are not left free.

It is probable that much of this feeling arises from the ignorance in which the public is left, and may be diminished, if not altogether dispelled, by the light of Mr Brodrick's latest defence of the Government. Lord Kitchener is, all admit, the best man that could have been found for the work. He has a great reputation to maintain. It may be taken as certain that, if he were refused the means necessary for success, or if he were interfered with in his military work, he would not continue to hold his command. If he is controlled by the Government in any matter, it is probably in the treatment of British subjects taken in arms, or convicted, after trial, of armed rebellion. The extraordinary interference with the sentences passed on such rebels by the courts, and the leniency with which Boers guilty of gross acts of treachery and breaches of the usages of war are treated, give colour to the surmise that the Commander-in-Chief is not free to use his discretion. Either the courts intrusted with the trial of such offenders are destitute of judg-

ment, and unable to discriminate between degrees of guilt, or there are influences at work which will not permit proper penalties to be exacted. In the former case, the business should be transferred to other courts, presided over by more discreet judges. In the latter case, the Government should be induced to understand that for a ruler to treat armed rebellion as a trivial misdemeanour is a negation of his right to rule; and that to allow such acts as the abuse of the White Flag or of the Red Cross to escape severe punishment, is to abet the murder of our men.

From the first there has been a disposition to look upon the rebellion of a Cape Colonist as a mere frolic. That a man should be able to join the King's enemies, and help to shoot down our soldiers, with no greater fear before him than a sentence of fine or a short term of imprisonment, is bad enough. That it should have occurred to any one to punish such crimes with disfranchisement is hardly credible. In what way is armed rebellion to be dealt with in the future in Ireland or in India? Has not an Irishman or an Indian flesh and blood and feelings as much as a Boer? A few death-sentences in such cases at the beginning of this business would have been worth much, and, it cannot be doubted, would have kept many Dutch farmers in the right way.

There is another cause, and one which can be easily removed, of the doubt felt as to the right conduct of the war. The information supplied

by the War Office in Lord Kitchener's short and disconnected telegrams is not sufficient to enable ordinary people to form an intelligible conception of the nature of the operations. Even the correspondents of the public journals and the private letters that are printed from time to time do not help us much. We should be the last to suggest that Lord Kitchener should be invited to write despatches for publication, or to amplify his telegrams. But without the risk of giving any information to the enemy, we are persuaded, notwithstanding Lord Salisbury's remarks, that the War Office might easily prepare and publish a statement showing the general nature of Lord Kitchener's plans and the principles on which he is working. The system of dividing the country by lines of block-houses into compartments within which it may be possible to "corner" the Boer commandoes appears admirable. It was left to the 'Times' a few weeks back to explain it. It is not to be supposed that the numerous columns which are operating against the enemy are shot into space and left to find their objective wherever and whenever they can. Yet no other idea could be derived from a perusal day by day of the brief messages from Lord Kitchener's headquarters. It may be surmised that these columns are acting on a well-considered system, are connected with each other by the hand and brain of the Commander-in-Chief, and are so working as to quarter the country carefully and give the Boer commandoes no rest.

If the public understood the nature of the operations, much of the impatience now manifested would disappear. It is easy to say Patience—be patient. But the only patience worth having in present circumstances is that which springs from a confidence that the best course is being followed.

We are left in similar and very unnecessary ignorance regarding what is being done to establish a civil government in the annexed territories. It is nearly a year ago now since Mr Chamberlain promised that a civil government should be constituted at once. Martial law is, no doubt, still absolutely necessary in some places. It may be questioned, however, whether a good deal that is now done by martial law and by the soldiers might not be better done by civil magistrates armed with the necessary powers. Such magistrates should be Englishmen of experience and not Dutch Afrikaners. The work of trying rebels, of concentrating the people in camps, and of looking after them in the camps, is not the work of soldiers. The guards for the camps ought to be military police, if it is possible, and this irksome duty should not be a burden on the troops. It will be said that the country is almost depopulated; and that, if it were otherwise, suitable Englishmen of experience are not forthcoming. The country will not be repopulated until a government is established. A beginning should be made even in a small area, surrounding or adjacent to one of the centres,

like Pretoria or Bloemfontein, where our military power is strongest; and from that the fabric of a civil Government should be extended and built up. Some definite area, however small, should be made safe for peaceful men to live and work in, under the protection of the law. As for the want of men to carry out such a measure, a country with the resources of England in the civil servants of her Indian dependency and in the officers of the British army and the Indian Staff Corps, cannot make such an excuse. If the Colonial Office, or whatever department of the Government may be concerned, will seek men, it will certainly find them.

Another element in the discontent of which we are writing is the weakness of Lord Salisbury's Government. Taken individually, there are not amongst them many men of great foresight and decision. Of Lord Salisbury's ability and experience in affairs, and of his wisdom, no doubt is possible. He is, however, enfeebled by years, and perhaps by ill-health beyond his years. Mr Chamberlain is a man of great power, but it may be doubted whether he is altogether happy in his environment, and whether in the strong family clique that surrounds him he is allowed to have the influence due to his capacity. It must be acknowledged, moreover, that he has the knack of rousing animosity by his manner of speech. Sir Michael Hicks-Beach is an excellent finance Minister. Next to Lord Salisbury, Mr Arthur Balfour is probably the man of

most intellectual power. Yet it is not certain that he is strong enough to lead the country in a time pre-eminently calling for decided action rather than for contemplative discussion and speech. Of the other members of the Government, whatever may be their powers of debate or their tactical skill in the House, there is none to whom the nation would care to commit its destinies.

Again there is a latent suspicion that the Government has more fear of the Pro-Boers and their outcries than confidence in the great majority who placed them in power and are ready to support them. The committee of women despatched to examine the refugee camps was a concession to clamour which, in the opinion of most men, ought not to have been made. We deny that it is right or convenient to subject the conduct of our officials in South Africa or elsewhere to the criticism of a committee of ladies. Where is this sort of thing to stop? The female element has been much too evident in South Africa, in various spheres and forms, almost from the beginning of the war. The action of the authorities in refusing Miss Hobhouse and her maid permission to do any more mischief will be welcomed by most men of sense and practical experience, and it is to be wished that the pair, as well as the whole gang of meddlesome women, had met with like treatment on their first visit.

On the other hand, it must be admitted that the Government has shown much staunch-

ness in supporting the military commanders in the work of clearing the country, and of removing the families of the Burghers to camps where they can be both protected and watched. The plain truth is, that there is no other way of dealing with the enemy. In Burma little way was made in putting an end to dacoity, which was guerilla warfare under another name, until the outlying villages were removed within the protected pale, and the relations of the men in the field were deported to distant parts of the country. It is simply a question whether it is desired to subjugate the Boers or not. If the persons who supply them with food and information, and mislead our troops, are left undisturbed, peace will be indefinitely postponed. It is mere false sentimentalism to raise an outcry because the measures necessary to reduce the enemy involve hardships to their families. Even in civil life, if a man commits a crime, he is removed temporarily or permanently from society, although the consequences may be destitution and ruin to his wife and family. The longer the business lasts, the greater will be the number of women and children left without support, both on our side and among the Boers. Even Sir William Harcourt does not think it barbarous to shoot the enemy in the field, or blow him to atoms with cordite-shells. He is quite pleased to hear of the Boers wrecking our trains, even to the destruction of peaceful passengers. The conduct of

the Germans in besieging Paris was not denounced as barbarous, although it must have caused infinitely more suffering and disease and death amongst non-combatants than all our concentration camps. Perhaps Sir William has omitted to notice that the Americans are being compelled to resort to similar measures in the Philippines. And the Americans pride themselves on superhuman humanity. It is to the credit of the Government that they have had the courage of their opinions in this vital matter, and it should win for them increased confidence. It is not within the scope of this article to go outside South Africa. It must be said, however, that in the China business Lord Salisbury's Government has steered us through very troubled waters. If our interests have not been upheld so forcibly as some could have wished, it must be recollected how impossible it was to make a demonstration of military strength.

In the matter of army reform the Government has promised much, but beyond the rearrangement of departments in the War Office performance has been small. In the public mind there is not much hope of the success of Mr Brodrick's scheme. It is certain that it will cost a great sum of money; and it is very doubtful whether the men will be forthcoming, or whether those that do come will be more efficiently trained and administered. There is every disposition, however, to give him fair-play. That part of

his scheme which was regarded with most hope was the affirmation of the principle that no man should command an army corps in time of peace who would not be selected to lead it in case of war. Hence the disfavour with which his action was viewed, when he selected three commanders who, whatever their merits, were disqualified by the condition he had laid down for holding these appointments. We do not propose here to enter into the controversy. Under the special circumstances of the time there is a good deal to be said in defence of the Secretary for War. Notably there is the fact that the three army corps do not exist. Nevertheless, Mr Brodrick's action was in defiance of his own declarations. And, after that, it is not surprising that the assertions of Mr Hanbury, that we have seen the last of female and society influences at the Horse Guards, should be regarded as a pleasantry. Every one knows that there is no chance of such a reign of purity for some time to come. The administration of the army, notwithstanding Mr Brodrick's promised reforms, is regarded with distrust and anxiety.

We recognise that so long as the war lasts in South Africa, it is not possible to reorganise the military administration thoroughly. It is as much as the War Office can do to keep the army in the field efficient and to supply the gaps caused by wastage. Meanwhile it is clear that the resources of the country are locked up in South Africa.

The depots and camps in England are mere training-schools for the army in the field. Of the British troops belonging to the Indian army some thousands are still in Africa. Of the remaining sixty thousand, between 20,000 and 30,000 are time-expired men who must be allowed to leave the colours. Large bounties and furlough to England are being, or have been, offered to them, to induce them to engage for a further term. It has not been announced yet how many men have accepted the offer, — probably not more than half. The army in India will therefore require, immediately after the termination of the war, large reinforcements, to maintain it even at its present reduced strength. It would be reassuring to know how the War Office intends to meet these demands. It is not likely that the Government of India will consent at the present time to allow the number of British troops in that country to be reduced.

The death of the Amir Abdul Rahman has not been followed by any trouble so far. Habib Ullah has succeeded to his father's throne without opposition, and all seems going merrily in Cabul at present. His subjects, and his rivals if there are any, will watch him for some time to come, and take the measure of his ability to govern. It is to be hoped that he will prove as able to keep that unruly race in subjection as was his father, and with methods less horrible and inhuman. There are few, however, who would venture to foretell the future, even the

immediate future, in Afghanistan. All that can be done is to hope for the best, and to make ourselves ready and strong to meet the storm should it arise. It is not a time to allow the British army in India to remain below its full number of seventy thousand men.

Apart from the possibility of a revolt in Afghanistan, there is the fear that advantage may be taken of our present weakness to stir up trouble in that region. If a movement were directed against any part of Afghan territory, England would be bound by treaty to assist the Amir. A call from him, under present circumstances, would be most inconvenient and difficult to meet. Another point of danger is the Persian Gulf. It would be to our disadvantage to have the warships of a foreign Power occupying a port in the Gulf. But are we in a position to prevent it? There are other contingencies which might arise that, if they are to be met, would require all our naval and military power. It is unnecessary and inexpedient to specify them.

The apprehensions caused by our present want of resources might be set aside if the spirit of foreign nations was friendly to us. If we have any friends, it is difficult to find them. The Governments, indeed, of Continental Europe have been irreproachable in their attitude throughout the last two years, as Lord Salisbury has justly acknowledged. They recognised, it may be, the justice of our cause, and had no desire in any way to injure

England. Or it may be that they have no wish, by interfering on behalf of the Boers, to hasten the day when we shall be freed from the South African embarrassment. But the nations have raged, and still rage, furiously against us. Whether it is due to belief in the abominable lies spread by the journals in Kruger's pay, or whether their hatred arises from rivalry and jealousy of our prosperity, it is not easy to say. Whatever the cause, their hatred, malice, and rancour are facts which it would be foolish to treat as altogether to be disregarded.

All these considerations tend to make the public mind very anxious. Men are watching eagerly for signs of the end of the war. But it is not yet. They do not wish it ended, as Sir William Harcourt and other friends of the enemy would end it, by surrendering to the Boers. Better years more of war than a compromise which would destroy the prestige of England and break up the Empire. Ay, break it up. If we prove ourselves unable or unwilling to end this business in the only satisfactory manner, by establishing once and for all the absolute supremacy of the British Government in South Africa, the Colonies will begin to leave us. Canada, foremost in loyal helpfulness, may be the first to go. For she is bound to us by the ties of sentiment rather than of self-interest. She is proud to hold a high place in the great British Empire. She will not consent to be an appanage of a senile and decaying kingdom. And what

she thinks the great Australian colonies will think also. Let those people whom sentiment and gushing humanitarianism or party spirit incline to follow Mr Morley or Sir William Harcourt, take this fact to heart.

What, then, are we to do? We reply, Keep the Government to their work. Make clear to all men that the nation is not wavering in its resolve, or inclined to review its judgment. Beyond doubt Mr Kruger and the Boer leaders in South Africa have strong hopes that there is coming a great change over public opinion in this country. The misguided utterances of the rhetoricians and partisans, who are the curse of our politics, feed these hopes every day that passes. Let every man who has the power to speak and write make evident the falsehood and futility of such anticipations. What is needed at the present time is a strong assertion by the nation of its determination to have nothing left undone which can lead to a speedy and final subjection of the remaining Boer commandoes. If more troops are needed, let them be sent at once. If more severity is necessary, let it be used, no matter what clamour may be raised by Mr Morley or Mr Leonard Courtney or the shrieking sisterhood. What the Unionists and Conservatives cannot away with is cowardice on the part of the men whom they have placed in power, hesitation to use the strength of the nation, and truckling to a foolish and misguided and most mischievous minority.

INDEX TO VOL. CLXX.

- ACROSS THE HIMALAYAS IN MID-WINTER, 206.
- ÆLFRED THE KING, 416.
- Agricultural troubles, widespread existence of, in Ireland, 411.
- Army reform, the new scheme of, 871.
- Astronomy, neglect of, in modern navigation, 476—use of, in Nansen's North Polar expedition, 477 *et seq.*
- AUSTRALIA, "PUSH" LARRIKINISM IN, 27.
- BAKER, TELLING MRS, 534.
- Batsmen, scores made by some modern, 340 *et seq.*—errors in play of, 342 *et seq.*
- Bennett, William Sterndale, recollections of, 321.
- BETWEEN THE LINES (Conclusion), 77.
- BIOGRAPHIES, THREE, 613.
- Boer laager, night attack on a, 580 *et seq.*
- BORDER BURN, A, 159.
- 'Boswell's Life of Johnson' edited by Augustine Birrell, notice of, 864.
- Bowling feats, some modern, 345 *et seq.*
- Bracken-harvest, the, in the New Forest, 660.
- British camp on the veldt, a, 718—Boer attack on, 720 *et seq.*
- British Navy, the, recent improvements in, 445, 451 *et seq.*—manning of, 449, 454.
- BUILT, THE HOUSE THAT WAS NEVER, 106.
- BURN, A BORDER, 159.
- 'Bush-Whacking and other Sketches' by Hugh Clifford, C.M.G., notice of, 270.
- BYRON, 1816-1824, 761.
- Byron, life of, at Venice, 762 *et seq.*—the cause of the Greeks espoused by, 769 *et seq.*
- 'Byron's Letters and Journals' edited by Rowland Prothero, notice of, 761 *et seq.*
- CAMPING ON LAKE WINNIPEG, 731.
- Caplin- and cod-fishing, the seasons of, in Labrador, 696.
- Carrying down, drill for, in the Metropolitan Fire Brigade, 167 *et seq.*
- CASTLE, DOOM: A ROMANCE, Chaps. XXXVIII.-XLI. (Conclusion), 53.
- Chancellor of the Exchequer, new taxation of the, 295.
- Chang, secretary to the Chinese Ambassador in London, diary of, 492 *et seq.*
- CHARLOTTE, THE CONQUEST OF, Part I., Chaps. I.-III., 1-IV., v., 185-VI.-II. VIII., 351-IX., x., 499-XI., XII., 668-XIII., 820.
- Chesil bank at Portland, dangers of the, 249.
- 'Chez nos Contemporains d'Angleterre' by M. Legras, notice of, 568.
- CHINA REVISITED, 523.
- China revisited: The Grand Fiasco, 523—Ordeal of Terror and Temptation, 525—Comparative Morality, *ib.*—Plain Deductions, 527—German Discipline, 528—Soldiers of all Nations, 529—The Flag Mania, 530—Military Friction, 531—Ravages of Foreign Troops, *ib.*—Indian Contingent, 532—Mutual Impressions, 533—Anglo-Saxon Relations, *ib.*
- CHINAMAN IN LONDON, A, 492.
- Chopin, Frederic, recollections of, 327.
- Clementi, Muzio, recollections of, 307.
- Coaling-stations, number of British, 115.
- Coast-defence, nations which aim mainly at, 443 *et seq.*
- 'Complete Works of William Hazlitt in Twelve Volumes, the,' edited by A. R. Waller and A. Glover, notice of, 857 *et seq.*
- CONQUEST OF CHARLOTTE, THE, Part I., Chaps. I.-III., 1-IV., v., 185-VI.-II. VIII., 351-IX., x., 499-XI., XII., 668-XIII., 820.
- Contraband of war, false reports regarding landing of, at Lorenzo Marquez, 699 *et seq.*

- CORSAIR OF SAINT MALO, A, 41.
 Corsairs of Saint Malo, services of the, 43—career of Duguay-Trouin, one of the, 45 *et seq.*
 Coster, the London-Irish, description of, 127—homes of, 128—social cohesiveness of, *ib.*
 'Count Hannibal' by Stanley J. Weyman, notice of, 799.
 'Country I come from, the,' by Henry Lawson, notice of, 796 *et seq.*
 Cramer, John Baptist, recollections of, 308.
 Cricket, growth of the game of, 488—origin of, 489.
 CRICKET RECORDS, 339.
 Czerny, Carl, recollections of, 326.
 Darnley, the murder of, discussed at Whittingham, 95—signing of the "band" against, *ib.* *et seq.*—the murder of, 97.
 DAY, 717.
 De Boigne, General, career of, 376.
 Delagoa Bay, duties of British war-vessels at, in the South African war, 700 *et seq.*
 DELAGOA BAY, WITH THE FLEET AT, 699.
 Docker population in London, the Irish, 129—influence of the Roman Catholic Church on, 132.
 DOOM CASTLE: A ROMANCE, Chaps. XXXVIII.-XLI. (Conclusion), 53.
 DOUBLE EVENT, SPECULATING ON A, 252.
 Douglas, the Rev. Mr Archibald, parentage of, 94—obtains a benefice, 95—made an Extraordinary Lord of Session, *ib.*—becomes a diplomatist, 96—at the murder of Darnley, 97—appointed an Ordinary Lord of Session, 98—receives the benefice of Glasgow, 99—dealings of, against Morton, 100—arrest of, by Queen Elizabeth, 102—pardon of, 103—last years of, 105.
 Duguay-Trouin, early life of, 45—assumes the rôle of a privateer, 46—receives a commission in the French Royal Navy, 49—some exploits of, *ib.* *et seq.*
 Dynamite outrages, the, at the Tower and Westminster, 182.
 Edinburgh Museum of Science and Art, appointment of Sir R. Murdoch Smith as Director of, 629.
 Edinburgh society in the time of R. L. Stevenson, sketch of, 619.
 Education Bill, withdrawal of the, 297.
 Education question, difficulties of the, in Ireland, 413.
 'End of an Epoch, the,' by A. Lincoln Green, notice of, 800.
 Engine drill, performance of, in the Metropolitan Fire Brigade, 170.
 Equatorial Province, Moslem sects of the, 545 *et seq.*
 Escape drill, various items of, in the Metropolitan Fire Brigade, 166 *et seq.*
 'Eternal City, the,' by Hall Caine, notice of, 439.
 FARCE, A LANGUID SESSION AND A LIBERAL, 293.
 FICTION, RECENT, 793.
 Field, John, recollections of, 310.
 Fighting column, a, formation of, on the high veldt, 277 *et seq.*—getting into action of, 279—bivouac of, 284—the continued fighting of, 286 *et seq.*—laager seized by, 290—march back of, 291.
 FINDING THE WAY TO THE POLE, 476.
 Fires, attendance at, by the Metropolitan Fire Brigade, 173 *et seq.*
 Floating stations, the, of the Metropolitan Fire Brigade, 172.
 Flower-girls, the Irish, some features in the character of, 126.
 FOUNTAINBLUE, 218.
 FRANCE, GAMES IN OLD AND MODERN, 485.
 FRANCINA VAN RHEDE: A LEGEND OF TRINCOMALEE, 649.
 'Frederick Uvedale' by Edward Hutton, notice of, 273.
 Games, decadence of, in France, 484—origin of, 485—efforts to revive, 491.
 GAMES IN OLD AND MODERN FRANCE, 485.
 GENTLEMAN OF SCOTLAND, A, 94.
 Golf, early playing of, in Scotland, 487—games cognate to, in France, 490.
 Gounod, Charles, recollections of, 329.
 Graham, Sir Gerald, character of, 624—letters of, from the Crimea, *ib.*—anecdotes of, 625.
 Grey, Sir Edward, speech of, at Peterborough, 304.
 HALT ON THE KING'S HIGHWAY, A, 115.
 Heller, Stephen, recollections of, 328.
 HER SISTER, 748.
 Herz, Henri, recollections of, 310.
 Hiller, Ferdinand, recollections of, 328.
 HIMALAYAS IN MID-WINTER, ACROSS THE, 206.
 HIRE SYSTEM, ON THE: A DRAWING-ROOM COMEDY, 591.
 'History of Sir Richard Calmady, the,' by Lucas Malet, notice of, 798 *et seq.*
 HORSE, SKINNER OF SKINNER'S, 374.
 HOUSE THAT WAS NEVER BUILT, THE, 106.
 'House with the Green Shutters, the,' by George Douglas, notice of, 801 *et seq.*
 Hummel, Johann Nepomuk, recollections of, 312.
 HUNG-CHANG, LI, 836.

- Imperialist wing, the, of the Liberal party, tenets of, 572 *et seq.*—character of, 578.
- India, internal administration of, 807 *et seq.*—irrigation works of, 811—railways of, 812—material prosperity of, 814—administration of justice in, 815—educational system of, 817.
- INDIA, THE STATE OF, 807.
- IRELAND, THE STATE OF, 405.
- Ireland, working of the New League in, 406—attitude of the landlords in, towards the lower classes, 407—differences of race in, 408—divisions caused by religion in, *ib.*—the modern theory of private property in land in, 409—agricultural troubles in, 411—the education question in, 413.
- Irish in London, numbers of, 124—trades and occupations of, *ib. et seq.*—employment of, at Covent Garden market, 126—retail vegetable trade in hands of, 127—labours of, at the docks, 129 *et seq.*—politics of, 133.
- Irish landlords, attitude of, towards the lower classes, 407.
- IRISH, THE LONDON, 124.
- Irregular cavalry, value of, in warfare, 387.
- 'Joe Wilson and his Mates' by Henry Lawson, notice of, 796 *et seq.*
- JONES OF PANNMAEN, 749.
- Jumping sheet, drill for the, in 'the Metropolitan Fire Brigade, 169.
- Jupiter's moons, finding Greenwich time by the eclipses of, 481.
- 'Kim' by Rudyard Kipling, notice of, 793 *et seq.*
- KING, ÆLFRED THE, 416.
- KING'S HIGHWAY, A HALT ON THE, 115.
- LABRADOR, LIFE IN, 688.
- Labrador, the inhabitants of, 688—physical and social features of, *ib.*—seal-fishing in, 692—the dogs of, 693—salmon-fishing in, 695—cod-fishing in, 696—the "truck" system in, 697—education in, *ib.*—attractions of, for visitors, 698.
- LAKE WINNIPEG, CAMPING ON, 731.
- LANGUID SESSION AND A LIBERAL FARCE, A, 293.
- Larrikinism, origin and growth of, in Australia, 27, 31—legal attempts to suppress, 28—amusements of, 32 *et seq.*—organisation of, 35 *et seq.*
- Le Bourgneuf, a lodging in, 64 *et seq.*—the annual fête at, 72—wine-making at, 74.
- 'Les Sports et Jeux d'Exercice dans l'Ancienne France' by M. Jusserand, notice of, 484 *et seq.*
- LI HUNG-CHANG, 836.
- Li Hung-chang, industry of, 837—military and naval reforms of, 838 *et seq.*—political career of, 842 *et seq.*—respect of, for foreigners, 846 *et seq.*—personal character of, 848 *et seq.*
- Liberal party, the, split in, 300 *et seq.*—divisions of, 571—Imperialist wing of, 572 *et seq.*—the wire-pullers of, 575—alliance of, with the Nationalists, 577.
- LIBERAL PARTY, THE TRUTH ABOUT THE, 570.
- LIFE IN LABRADOR, 688.
- 'Life, Letters, and Diaries of Lieut.-Gen. Sir Gerald Graham' by Colonel R. H. Vetch, notice of, 623 *et seq.*
- 'Life of Major-General Sir Robert Murdoch Smith' by W. K. Dickson, notice of, 626 *et seq.*
- 'Life of Robert Louis Stevenson' by Graham Balfour, notice of, 613 *et seq.*
- LINES, BETWEEN THE (Conclusion), 77.
- Liszt, Franz, recollections of, 314.
- LITTLE SON, THE, 522.
- LONDON, A CHINAMAN IN, 492.
- London docks, Irish workers at the, 129 *et seq.*
- LONDON IRISH, THE, 124.
- Looe, the pilchard-fishery of, 331—the fishermen of, 336.
- Lorenzo Marquez, false reports regarding contraband of war at, 699 *et seq.*—natural features of, 700—plot to blow up British war-vessels at, 705—the "Irish Brigade" at, *ib.*—Paul Kruger at, *ib.*—moral effects of British squadron at, 706.
- L.-T., OUR, 419.
- 'Marietta' by F. Marion Crawford, notice of, 799.
- MARRIED, NEVER, 747.
- Mediterranean fleet, proposed additions to the, 447 *et seq.*
- Mendelssohn, Felix, recollections of, 315 *et seq.*
- Metropolitan Fire Brigade, the, drill class of, 166 *et seq.*—workshops of, 171—floating stations of, 172—attendance at fires of, 173 *et seq.*
- METROPOLITAN FIRE BRIGADE, THREE YEARS WITH THE, 165.
- MINISTRY AND THE WAR, THE, 865.
- Moscheles, Ignace, recollections of, 309.
- MOSLEM CONFRATERNITIES OF NORTH AFRICA, THE, 545.
- Mozart, Wolfgang Amadeus, son of the composer, recollections of, 324.
- MUSINGS WITHOUT METHOD:—
July: Lord Milner and the Country, 135—The Vituperation of the Press, *ib.*—Words that convey no Thought, 136—The Delegation of Authority, 138—The Treatment of Sir Bartle Frere, 139—The Cult of the Millionaire, 141—The Bayard of the Money-bag, *ib.*—The Danger of Philanthropy, 142—*Pecunia olet*, 145.

MUSINGS WITHOUT METHOD—*continued* :

August : The Worship of Speed, 260 — The Universal Passion of Racing, 261 — The Consequent Decay of Sport, *ib.* — Pace without Muscle, *ib.* — The Development of Cricket, 262 — The Hustler in Literature, 265 — The Vandal at Work, 266 — Marble Hill and Hogarth House, 267 — 'Bush-Whacking,' 268.

September : The Palm without the Dust, 429 — Lord Rosebery's Lassitude, *ib.* — His Political Uncertainty, 430 — The Creation of Mr Gladstone, *ib.* — The Favourite of the Press, 432 — Lord Chesterfield's Letters, 433 — The World's Misunderstanding, 434 — His Morality, 435 — His Political Wisdom and Prescience, 436 — Mr Caine and his Rival, 440 — The Virtue of Imagination, *ib.* — A Surfeit of Emotion, 441 — An Egyptian Pleasantry, 442.

October : The Murder of William McKinley, 559 — America's wise and simple President, *ib.* — Anarchy wickedly excused, 560 — The Cant of "Political Crime," 561 — How to treat Anarchists, *ib.* — An imprisoned Emperor, 563 — The Censorship of the Press, 564 — French and English, 566 — A better Knowledge across the Channel, *ib.* — M. Chevrillon's intelligent Appreciation, 567.

November : The Need of Efficiency, 707 — The Appointment of Sir Redvers Buller, *ib.* — The Press and the Army, 708 — Sir Redvers condemned in Despatches, 709 — The Evidence of his own Speech, 710 — The Government more blameworthy than the General, 712 — The Timidity of our Ministers, *ib.* — The relation of the Parliament to the Country, *ib.* — The new Translation of Tolstoi, 713 — The Edinburgh Folio, 715.

December : Two Years of Emotion, 852 — Great Occasions and their Pageantry, *ib.* — The Return of the Duke of York, 853 — Our Colonial Empire, 854 — The Confusion of Tongues, 855 — The Old Radical and the New, 857 — An Edition of Hazlitt, *ib.* — His Political Prejudices, 858 — His Interest in Life and Letters, 860 — William Hazlitt and Samuel Johnson, 862.

'My Brilliant Career' by Miles Franklin, notice of, 798.

Nansen's North Polar expedition, astronomical observations made during, 477 *et seq.* — correction of chronometers in, 480 — observations of the eclipses of Jupiter's moons by, 481. Nationalist members of the House of Commons, character of the, 415.

NAVAL PROGRESS, RECENT, 443.

Navigation, the new *versus* the old mode of, 476 *et seq.*

Neate, Charles, recollections of, 311.

NEVER MARRIED, 747.

NEW FOREST, A VILLAGE IN THE, 658.

New Forest village, a, description of, 658 *et seq.* — the Commoners of, 659 — the cottages in, 662 — the women of, 664 — the religious sects of, 665 — some educational improvements in, 666.

New League, working of the, in Ireland, 406.

NIGHT, 579.

NORTH AFRICA, THE MOSLEM CONFRATERNITIES OF, 545.

NOVELS, THREE, 271.

ON THE HIRE SYSTEM : A DRAWING-ROOM COMEDY, 591.

Ophthalmia, prevalence of, in Portland, 244.

ORGANISATION, WAR OFFICE, 146.

OUR L.-T., 419.

PANNMAEN, JONES OF, 749.

PIANISTS OF THE PAST, 307.

PILCHARD FLEET, WITH THE, 331.

Pilchards, the curing of, 332 — the net-fishing for, 333 *et seq.*

POLE, FINDING THE WAY TO THE, 476.

PORTLAND, 243.

Portland, the inhabitants of, 244 — prevalence of ophthalmia in, *ib.* — description of, *ib. et seq.* — land tenure in, 246 — the Chesil bank of, 249 — the quarries of, 251.

Private property, exemption of, from capture at sea in war-time, 41.

Private property in land, the modern theory of, in Ireland, 409.

"PUSH" LARRIKINISM IN AUSTRALIA, 27.

"Pushes" or secret communities, origin and growth of, in Australia, 27, 31 *et seq.* — legal measures taken to suppress, 28 — revived power of, 29 *et seq.* — clubs formed by, 33 — *camaraderie* amongst members of, *ib.* — political aims of, 34 — organisation of, 35 *et seq.* — character and social life of members of, 38 — members of, 39.

Race, differences of, in Ireland, 408.

RECENT FICTION, 793.

RECENT NAVAL PROGRESS, 443.

RECORDS, CRICKET, 339.

RECTOR'S STORY, A, 389.

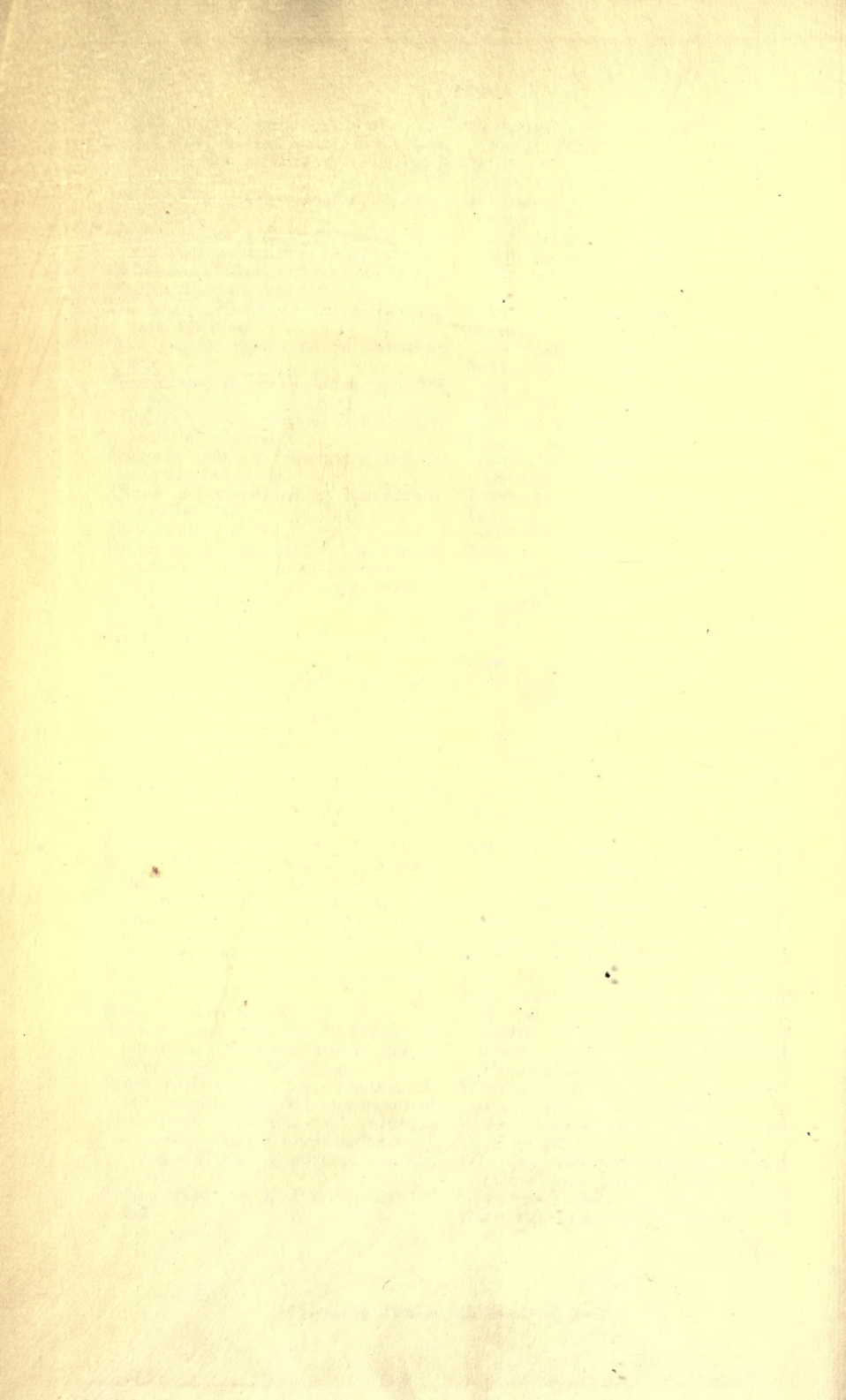
Religion, divisions caused by, in Ireland, 408.

REVISITED, CHINA, 523.

Riccio, the plan to murder, 95.

Rosebery, Lord, letter of, to the City Liberal Club, 302 *et seq.* — failure of, as a politician, 429 — influence of Mr Gladstone on, 430 *et seq.* — popularity of, with the press, 432.

- SAINT MALO, A CORSAIR OF, 41.
 Saint Malo, rise and history of the town of, 42—the corsairs of, 43 *et seq.*—decay of, 51.
 Salmon fishing, importance of, in Labrador, 695.
 Sealing-ladder drill, performance of, in the Metropolitan Fire Brigade, 169.
 Schumann, Robert, recollections of, 325.
 SCOTLAND, A GENTLEMAN OF, 94.
 Sea-keeping Navies, nations which maintain, 443 *et seq.*
 Seal-fishing, modes of, in Labrador, 692.
 Senussi sect of North Africa, the, 553 *et seq.*
 ‘Serious Wooing, the,’ by Mrs Craigie, notice of, 272 *et seq.*
 Shereefs, political influence of the, in Algeria, 545 *et seq.*
 ‘Shoes of Fortune, the,’ by Neil Munro, notice of, 799.
 SIDE-SHOW, A, 277.
 Singapore, the founding of, 116—visit of Duke and Duchess of Cornwall and York to, 117 *et seq.*—gathering of children at, 122.
 SISTER, HER, 748.
 ‘Sister Theresa’ by George Morris, notice of, 275.
 Skinner, Colonel James, birth and parentage of, 375—joins the Mahratta service, 376—takes part in the campaign against Rajah George Thomas, 378—appointed to command of Skinner’s Horse, 382—some achievements of, 383 *et seq.*—last years of, 386—services of, to the British Army, 387.
 SKINNER OF SKINNER’S HORSE, 374.
 Smith, Sir Robert Murdoch, archaeological labours of, 626 *et seq.*—work of, in connection with Persian telegraph system, 628—appointment of, to Edinburgh Museum of Science and Art, 629—character of, *ib.*
 Snowstorm in the Himalayas, description of a, 212 *et seq.*
 SON, THE LITTLE, 522.
 South African veldt, the, description of night on, 579—night attack upon a Boer laager on, 580 *et seq.*
 South African war, the, duration of, 865—conduct of, 866—ignorance of the public regarding, 867—attitude of the Government towards, 869 *et seq.*—necessity for vigorous prosecution of, 873.
 SPECULATING ON A DOUBLE EVENT, 252.
 Squirrels, destruction of, in the New Forest, 662.
 STATE OF INDIA, THE, 807.
 STATE OF IRELAND, THE, 405.
 Stevenson, R. L., childhood of, 615—school life of, 616—eccentricities of, 617—Edinburgh society in the time of, 619—departure of, for the South Seas, 621—estimate of the literary powers of, *ib. et seq.*
 STORY, A RECTOR’S, 389.
 Submarine torpedo-boat, modern development of the, 456.
 Sudan, the Moslem sects of the, 545 *et seq.*
 Sufism, the doctrine of, 548.
 Sullivan, Arthur, recollections of, 310.
 TELLING MRS BAKER, 534.
 Temperance legislation, neglect of, by Government, 296.
 Tennis, the game of, in France, 486.
 Thalberg, Sigismund, recollections of, 322 *et seq.*
 Thomas, Rajah George, remarkable career of, 379.
 THREE BIOGRAPHIES, 613.
 THREE NOVELS, 271.
 THREE YEARS WITH THE METROPOLITAN FIRE BRIGADE, 165.
 Torpedos, use of, in war, 456.
 TRINCOMALEE, FRANCINA VAN RHEDE : A LEGEND OF, 649.
 TRUTH ABOUT THE LIBERAL PARTY, THE, 570.
 VAL D’OR, A VILLAGE IN THE, 64.
 VILLAGE IN THE NEW FOREST, A, 658.
 VILLAGE IN THE VAL D’OR, A, 64.
 ‘Warden of the Marches’ by Sydney C. Grier, notice of, 795 *et seq.*
 War Office Committee, the, report of, 146 *et seq.*—proposals of, with regard to decentralisation, 148—evidence of the Duke of Connaught before, 149—and of Colonel Hildebrand, 150—Sir Henry Brackenbury before, 154 *et seq.*
 WAR OFFICE ORGANISATION, 146.
 WAR, THE MINISTRY AND THE, 865.
 War-vessels, Russia’s increased number of, 444—modern improvements in British, 445, 451 *et seq.*—duties of British, at Delagoa Bay, in the South African War, 700 *et seq.*
 WESTCOTES, THE, Chaps. I.-III., 458—IV.-VI., 631—VII.-IX., 772.
 Wine-making, the process of, in a French village, 74.
 Winnipeg, Lake, a sporting party at, 733 *et seq.*—native church at, 741 *et seq.*
 WITH THE FLEET AT DELAGOA BAY, 699.
 WITH THE PILCHARD FLEET, 331.



AP
4
B6
v.170

Blackwood's magazine

**PLEASE DO NOT REMOVE
CARDS OR SLIPS FROM THIS POCKET**

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO LIBRARY
